Community welcomes easing of restrictions. PAGE 2
SNILD confirms 3 new Zoning board members. PAGE 3

75¢

Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XXX, Issue No. 104

www.saipantribune.com | WEDNESDAY MAY 27, 2020 | www.facebook.com/saipantribune

No exemptions to quarantine

By JUSTINE NAUTA
justine_nauta@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Any traveler, returning resident, or visitor who will be flying to Guam will still have to go under quarantine, even if you have a certificate stating that you have tested negative for COVID-19.

Linda DeNorcey, director of the Guam's Department of Public Health and Social Services, told CNMI reporters that the negative COVID-19 test only exempts you from being quarantined for 14 days at a GovGuam facility. You will still have to undergo the 14-day quarantine at

See QUARANTINE on Page 4

AT A GLANCE

As of 6pm, May 26, 2020

GUAM	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	166	1	167
Recovered	139	0	139
Active	23	1	24
Deaths	6*	0	6*

SAIPAN	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	22	0	22
Recovered	13	0	13
Active	7	0	7
Deaths	2	0	2
Cumulative Number of Persons Tested**			4,940

*Total includes a sailor from the USS *Theodore Roosevelt.*

**Total count includes the number of persons tested on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota. Guam has one new probable case.

Source: Joint Information Center - Guam, Commonwealth Health Care Corp.

VULNERABILITY LEVEL

YELLOW

THIS MEANS:

- All businesses open to the public now open from 5am to 9pm;
- Restaurants may serve dine-in customers, with social distancing and at 25% of allowed occupancy limit;
- Curfew hours: 11pm to 5am;
- Church and worship services can start, but attendance limited to 25% of allowed occupancy;
- Gyms are allowed to open;
- Public parks, including the Grotto, remain closed to public;
- Mañagaha now open to public;
- All public beaches and pathways are closed, except for exercise and shoreline subsistence fishing;
- Casino, poker arcades, and e-gaming facilities remain closed;
- Tourism businesses establish procedures in preparation for tourist arrivals.

Source: Office of the Governor

Fire engulfs a grassy field in Koblerville across the Saint Jude Parish church. Inset is a picture provided by the Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services. KRIZEL TUAZON

Fire engulfs open field in Koblerville

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A wildfire that engulfed a large portion of an open field in Koblerville yesterday gave a scare to nearby residents as the flames crept nearer to homes in the area, but Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services crew were soon able to put the blaze under control.

DFEMS spokesperson Derric Gersonde said the fire hasn't been put completely out as of 5pm and DFEMS personnel stayed back to make sure the fire remained under control.

In a statement, DFEMS said that dispatch received a call around 1:58pm, reporting a grass fire in Koblerville across the Saint Jude Parish church.

See FIRE on Page 4

ACS target date pushed back

By JUSTINE NAUTA
justine_nauta@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The target date for the completion of the Alternative Care Site, which is meant to isolate active COVID-19 cases, at the Kanoa Resort in Susupe has been pushed back from May 25 to May 28.

According to Warren Villagomez, the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force chairman, 80% of the medical equipment is on island, but there is still critical medical equipment that are on the way and

See ACS on Page 4

IPI request to reduce time to hear motion to suspend $6.8-million judgment denied

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona denied yesterday without prejudice Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC's request to shorten the time to hear IPI's motion to stay or suspend execution of the court's $6.8-million judgment in favor of IPI's former contractor pending resolution of IPI's appeal of that ruling.

Denial without prejudice means the court does not prohibit IPI from raising the same issue in the future. Shortening time refers to a court's order in response to a motion of a party to a lawsuit that allows setting a legal matter at a time shorter than provided by court rules.

IPI, through counsel Mi-

See IPI on Page 4

INSIDE

BUSINESS
Kinpachi Restaurant will reopen its open-air dining facility this week.
PAGE 11

NATION
Americans settled for small processions and online tributes on Memorial Day.
PAGE 14

ASIA
Japan lifts the coronavirus state of emergency in Tokyo and four other remaining areas.
PAGE 15

SCAN ME WITH A COMPATIBLE QR READER TO KEEP UPDATED ON ALL THE LATEST NEWS.

GOT A NEWS TIP? TEL: 235-6397 / 235-2440 FAX: 235-3740 EMAIL: editor@saipantribune.com

Local

Community welcomes easing of restrictions

After nearly two months of restrictions to help stop the spread of COVID-19, the CNMI community heaved a sigh of relief yesterday after the government eased those restrictions, starting with the reopening of dine-in services in restaurants, resumption of church services, and even allowing health buffs to go back to the gym, among others. As part of Gov. Ralph DLG Torres' new directive, curfew was also pushed back an hour and will now be from 11pm to 5am.

Christian Aldan of Gualo Rai said it's easier for consumers now that businesses and establishments are able to open up to the public for longer hours. "It's been hard for most people to catch the store at 6pm with them coming back from work and now with the [new] curfew, it is much easier for all of us. And with dine-in, I think it is alright to have that, as long as we maintain social distancing," he said.

For 19-year-old Grace (last name withheld upon request) of Koblerville, the new curfew hours and businesses allowed to open for dine-in brings a sense of normalcy, which the islands haven't felt in a while. She said it shows the CNMI is slowly getting back to its feet and the economy is finally starting some movement. "As businesses extend their business hours, more jobs will be available such as restaurant servers and cashiers, etc. People can work for longer hours, which gives them more money to provide their necessities. However, it is still not safe to be exposed to many people but I hope all businesses will take extra precautions to ensure our safety and health are in good hands."

Josh (last name withheld upon request), another 19-year-old from San Antonio, believes that, while it's a step in the right direction, it is still a tad premature. "I feel that it came earlier than I expected. I think Gov. Torres should have locked us down for a week again, and just focused on more testing before moving us to [Code] Yellow. For the businesses that are allowing dine-ins, I'm glad that jobs are coming back, but I personally would not see myself dining in as an option for a while."

For 23-year-old Diane (last name withheld upon request) of Chalan Kiya, she said the enhanced curfew and business dine-ins should all be welcome but with precautions. "As we make our way into a new normal here in the CNMI, my only hope is that we continue to be cautious. Stay safe and resilient, CNMI," she said.

Marielle (last name withheld upon request), 19, of Dandan shared that the change of curfew hours doesn't matter to her because it has only been extended for an hour. "The extension of curfew…doesn't change my way of living right now. I still will not be going out much. As for businesses that are now allowing their customers to dine-in, that is probably what I look forward to. I probably won't be eating inside in the restaurants routinely, but it is certainly reassuring knowing that I have that option." ***(Chevy Alipio)***

Most of CUC's offline water wells are due to chemical contaminants

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. has 21 water wells on Saipan that are offline and most of these are due to chemical contaminants, according to CUC executive director Gary P. Camacho.

CUC said that both perflourooctane sulfonates, or PFOS, and perfluorooctanoic acid, or PFOA, are human-made substances and are not naturally found in the environment and have been used extensively in commercial goods (carpets, clothing, furniture, paper packaging for food) and in materials that are resistant to water, grease or stain such as cookware.

In his recent report to the CUC board of directors, Camacho said 10 wells were turned off due to PFOA/PFOS contaminants; four due to collapsed casing and low production; one shaft due to collapsed infiltration tunnel; one offline due to E. coli contamination; and five due to motor failure and E. coli contamination.

Camacho noted that U.S. District Court for the NMI designated Judge David O. Carter ordered the shutdown of two wells due to PFOA/PFOS contamination.

Camacho said CUC assisted with the Public Health Emergency COVID-19 for the Marianas Resort quarantine site to get water well No. 2 by making the transmission line and water tanks operational for use.

CUC has 140 water wells on Saipan, including one that was abandoned. There are 118 wells that are online. CUC is planning to buy and install 10 granulated activated carbon system units to filter CUC's drinking water and remove chemicals that cause contamination.

Last Jan. 8, CUC issued a health advisory that it had detected in some areas on Saipan levels of PFOS and PFOA that exceeded U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's health advisory level of 70 parts per trillion in a water system.

Coast Guard rescues sailboater off Guam after vessel dismasted

SANTA RITA, Guam—A 53-year-old boater is safe in Guam after the Coast Guard rescued him from his dismasted 14-foot catamaran in outer Apra Harbor last, Sunday. A 29-foot Coast Guard boat towed the vessel to the Marinas Yacht Club. There were no reports of injury.

Command duty officer Jason Roman, a JRSC Guam watchstander, said, "The boater did the right thing and contacted us on VHF Channel 16, and we were able to act swiftly." At 6:02pm, Guam watchstanders received a call over VHF Channel 16 from the boater explaining his vessel was dismasted and adrift about a mile offshore. Watchstanders then launched the RB-S crew. Once on the scene, the RB-S crew towed the boater and his boat safely back to shore.

"Our crews train regularly in towing evolutions to ensure they are prepared for just this type of situation," said Petty Officer 2nd Class Matthew Sheeler, a coxswain from Station Apra Harbor. "It was because of our readiness, we were able to launch quickly and bring the vessel back safely."

Reported weather on scene was winds of 16 mph and seas up to 2 feet. ***(USCG)***

SNILD confirms 3 new Zoning board members

By IVA MAURIN
iva_maurin@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Saipan and Northern Islands Legislative Delegation confirmed yesterday three of Gov. Ralph DLG Torres' nominees to the Commonwealth Zoning Board.

Joe E. Ayuyu, Jr. will be regaining his position as board member, while Kevin Deleon Guerrero and Perry Inos, Jr. are both new appointees. The three will each serve two years.

Their confirmations were unanimously affirmed by all 18 members of the SNILD present at the session. Sen. Sixto Igisomar (R-Saipan), Sen. Justo Quitugua (R-Saipan), and Rep. Marco Peter (R-Saipan) were excused.

As endorsed by the SNILD's Committee on Judiciary and Governmental Operations, the appointments for Dong Kyu Lee and Juan Wabol were rejected. Lee did not meet the citizenship requirements and Wabol was not able to submit the documents needed to proceed with the confirmation.

Former Zoning board member, and now lawmaker, Rep. Joel Camacho (R-Saipan) said that the SNILD is pleased with all three confirmed nominees, who are diverse in terms of knowledge and experience.

"There's [going to] be a lot of outside pressures. I was a Zoning board member, and I've dealt with both the support and the opposition sides of development that takes place within parts of our island. I told them to take the pressure and strike, but always practice your best judgment," he said. "They are all equipped with the necessary educational background to make those critical decisions and I'm pretty sure that they will. I'm happy for them and I congratulate them and I thank the governor and the lieutenant governor for the nominations."

Reappointed to his fourth two-year term on the Saipan Zoning board, Ayuyu is again looking forward to working with his Zoning colleagues, as well as community members, developers, and different stakeholders in shaping and organizing the development of Saipan. "I know there will be challenges as we balance the interests of the different stakeholders, but I am confident in the Saipan Zoning office, the administrator, and board members' abilities to make the right decisions for the well-being of the community," Ayuyu said. "I am committed to making balanced decisions on the needs of the community and needs of our island."

First-time board member Inos is looking into making zoning regulations more accessible. "I'm from here and this is home. Making changes for the betterment of the CNMI will really help my aim," he said.

Deleon Guerrero, on the other hand, wants the economy diversified. "I really feel that the entire CNMI is still dependent on tourism. I want to see our economy be more robust. …We want all types of businesses where even when our tourism suffers, they don't encounter the same amount of negative impact," he said.

Deleon Guerrero also wants to see more exports from Saipan. "I want to see something on a larger scale, something that would really contribute to our economy to the point of millions of dollars and not just hundreds of dollars."

WE ARE
OVERSTOCKED
DRIVE NOW PAY LATER!
NO PAYMENTS FOR 6 MONTHS
HYUNDAI
STK: HYUNDAI ELANTRA SE SAVINGS PRICE
0H032 BLACK, 2.0L 4SDN 6EAT $3,000 $19,995
20H043 INTENSE BLUE, 2.0L 4SDN 6MT $3,000 $19,995
STK: HYUNDAI ELANTRA SPORT SAVINGS PRICE
0H022 FLUID METAL, 2.0L 4SDN 6EAT $4000 $23,995
0H012 IRON GRAY, 2.0L 4SDN 6MT $4000 $23,995
STK: HYUNDAI VELOSTER SAVINGS PRICE
0H034 GRAY, 1.6L 3DR. COUPE 6M SOLD $2,000 $24,995
20H068 BLUE, VELOSTER N 1.6L 3DR. COUPE 6MT $4,000 $28,995
STK: HYUNDAI VENUE SE SAVINGS PRICE
20H087 EXOTIC GREEN, 1.6L 5WGN 2WD 6EAT $2,000 $19,995
20H133 MT BLACK/ BLUE, 1.6L 5WGN 6EAT $3,000 $19,995
20H144 MT WHITE/ DENIM, 1.6L 5WGN 6EAT $3,000 $19,995
STK: HYUNDAI KONA L SAVINGS PRICE
20H077 BLUE LAGOON, 2.0L 5WGN 2WD 6EAT $3,000 $21,995
STK: HYUNDAI TUCSON GL SAVINGS PRICE
20H056 MAGNETIC FORCE, 2.0L 5WGN 2WD 6EAT $2,000 $24,995
20H127 GEMSTONE RED, 2.0L 5WGN 2WD 6EAT $2,000 $24,995
20H155 WHITE, 2.0L 5WGN 2WD 6EAT $2,000 $24,995
STK: HYUNDAI PALISADE SPORT SAVINGS PRICE
20H047 STEEL GRAPHITE, 3.8L 5WG SOLD $2,000 $36,995
20H053 RAIN FOREST, 3.8L 5WGN 6EAT $2,000 $36,995
20H134 STEEL GRAPHITE, 3.8L 5WGN 8EAT $2,000 $36,995
20H136 BURGUNDY, 3.8L 5WGN 8EAT $2,000 $36,995
20H081 WHITE CREAM, 3.8L 5WGN SOLD $2,000 $36,995
ZERO $0 DOWN
2020 HYUNDAI PALISADE
PASSPORT to SAVINGS
TRIPLE J ADVANTAGE
2020 MITSUBISHI OUTLANDER SE
MITSUBISHI
STK: MITSUBISHI MIRAGE G4 SAVINGS PRICE
20M056 PEARL WHITE, 1.2L 4DR AT SOLD $2,000 $16,995
20M061 GRAY, 1.2L 4DR AT $2,000 $16,995
20M070 BLACK, 1.2L 4DR AT $2,000 $16,995
20M071 BLUE, 1.2L 4DR AT $2,000 $16,995
20M089 METALLIC RED, 1.2L 4DR AT $2,000 $16,995
20M090 BLUE MICA, 1.2L 4DR AT $2,000 $16,995
20M091 WINE RED, 1.2L 4DR AT $2,000 $16,995
STK: MITSUBISHI MIRAGE SE SAVINGS PRICE
20M053 GRAY, 1.2L 5HB AT $2,000 $16,995
20M054 BLACK, 1.2L 5HB AT $2,000 $16,995
20M117 WHITE PEARL, 1.2L 5HB AT $2,000 $16,995
20M142 METALLIC RED, 1.2L 5HB AT $2,000 $16,995
20M144 BLUE, 1.2L 5HB AT $2,000 $16,995
STK: MITSUBISHI OUTLANDER SE SAVINGS PRICE
20M072 BROWN, 2.4L 5WGN 6EAT $5,000 $26,995
20M073 GRAY, 2.4L 5WGN 6EAT $5,000 $26,995
20M074 BLUE, 2.4L 5WGN 6EAT $5,000 $26,995
20M075 BLACK, 2.4L 5WGN 6EAT SOLD $5,000 $26,995
20M076 SILVER, 2.4L 5WGN 6EAT $5,000 $26,995
SHOP WITH CONFIDENCE
Masks must be worn at all times
Mandatory employee temperature check daily
Sanitation stations are placed around the showroom
Vehicles are disinfected before and after every test drive
6'
We practice social distancing
mazda
STK: MAZDA3 SPORT SAVINGS PRICE
0D007 JET BLACK, 2.5L 4SDN 6EAT $2,000 $21,995
20D014 MACHINE GRAY, 2.5L 4SDN SOLD $2,000 $21,995
20D042 SNOWFLAKE WHITE PEARL, 2.5L 4SDN 6EAT $2,000 $21,995
20D071 POLYMETAL GRAY, 2.5L 4SDN SOLD $2,000 $21,995
20D097 SOUL RED, 2.5L 4SDN 6EAT $2,000 $21,995
STK: MAZDA6 SPORT SAVINGS PRICE
9D156 SNOWFLAKE WHITE PEARL, 2.5L 4SDN 6EAT $4,000 $22,995
0D012 SOUL RED CRYSTAL, 2.5L 4SDN 6EAT $2,000 $26,995
20D023 SNOWFLAKE WHITE PEARL, 2.5L 4SDN 6EAT $2,000 $26,995
20D037 JET BLACK, 2.5L 4SDN 6EAT SOLD $2,000 $26,995
STK: MAZDA MX-5 CLUB SAVINGS PRICE
9D196 SNOWFLAKE WHITE PEARL SOLD MT S/TOP $5,000 $33,995
20D089 RF MACHINE GRAY, 2.0L 2DR. 6MT S/TOP $3,000 $38,995
STK: MAZDA CX-3 SPORT SAVINGS PRICE
20D018 SNOWFLAKE WHITE PEARL, 2.0L 5WGN 6EAT 2WD $3,000 $21,995
20D022 CERAMIC, 2.0L 5WGN 6EAT 2WD $3,000 $21,995
20D052 SOUL RED, 2.0L 5WGN 6EAT 2WD $3,000 $21,995
20D074 JET BLACK, 2.0L 5WGN 6EAT 2WD $3,000 $21,995
20D031 MACHINE GRAY, 2.0L 5WGN SOLD $3,000 $21,995
STK: MAZDA CX-5 SPORT SAVINGS PRICE
20D031 SONIC SILVER, 2.5L 5WGN 6 SOLD $3,000 $25,995
STK: MAZDA CX-9 SPORT SAVINGS PRICE
20D090 MACHINE GRAY, 2.5L 5WGN SOLD $5,000 $31,995
2020 MAZDA MX-5 CLUB
Customers First
TRIPLE J
TRIPLE J MOTORS
MON-FRI: 8AM TO 5PM SAT: 8AM TO 12PM
BEACH ROAD, CHALAN LAULAU
TEL: (670)234-7133/234-3051
WWW.TRIPLEJSAIPAN.COM
Like us on facebook
Triple J Motors, Saipan
@triplejmotors
*On approved credit (OAC). Some conditions apply. Doc fees and registration not included. Cannot be combined with any other offer. Vehicles may not be exactly as shown. See dealer for more details. Maximum credit card payment toward vehicle purchase is $2,500.

Torres: July 15 is a moving target date

By IVA MAURIN
iva_maurin@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The CNMI has set a target date of July 15 to reopen the CNMI to tourists, but that is not set in stone and there are many moving parts that are still being addressed leading up to that date.

Speaking at a radio news briefing yesterday, Gov. Ralph DLG Torres clarified that the July 15 date is the goal but that date is a moving target. "Our goal is to hit July 15, and if we make it, excellent. If not, it's a moving target date. The most important is to make sure that our tourist partners understands, we have an understanding, on how to approach our new tourism industry here," he said.

The CNMI government is also working with the CNMI's partners in Japan and South Korea to address concerns. "There's a lot of moving factors that needs to be addressed before we get there. It's not as simple as opening up and hope that they come. There's a strong collaboration," he added.

With Skymark Airlines Inc.'s recent announcement that their flights will be moved to the end of July, Torres said that there is more time for the community to adjust and feel safe about the reopening of the CNMI.

He said that the COVID-19 Task Force, and the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp., together with his Economic Recovery team, have been working on looking into where the community stands in relation to the COVID-19 mass testing, the community's vulnerability level, and what directives should and can be alleviated.

New directives too fast?

When asked whether the lifting of restrictions are happening too fast, with the CNMI jumping two steps from Red to Yellow on the color-coded community vulnerability scale, CHCC chief executive officer Esther Muña said, "It's actually not too fast. …The restrictions are still there."

Muña highlighted what the community has collectively accomplished to help mitigate the spread of COVID-19 on island, in terms of social distancing, sanitation, wearing of masks, and taking the test.

"It took a lot of thinking about what can we do, and how can we ensure the public that they are safe. A lot of it is also monitoring and checking and making sure that there are actually penalties…if you don't follow," she said. "Those restrictions are there for a reason. Again, it can always be taken back. …If you have to go back to red, if that's what's going to happen, then we're going to have to go back to even stricter directives. That's what we're going to do."

The CHCC CEO also said that the directives are also about how many people are being tested and how prevalent COVID-19 is in the community.

As for businesses, Muña said that meetings with the Saipan Chamber of Commerce had been happening, focusing on social distancing and sanitation that they need to implement as they resume operations.

"Some of these establishments already practice using that guidance. Most, if not all of them, already are practicing it so we will continue to provide that support for them. We're available. The Bureau of Environmental Health is there working with them, making sure that they understand what is required," she added.

Torres assured that, compared with neighboring territories and the rest of the United States, the CNMI has the strictest directives in place. "Our growth and our lifting of directive is based on our success and progress as a community. Everyone, [including] our private partners, have a stake into reopening CNMI. ...I strongly believe that we're moving in the right direction and [at] the right pace."

Law firm wants out as IPI counsel in recycling firm case

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The law firm of O'Connor Berman Horey & Banes now wants out as counsel for the Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC in IPI's lawsuit against a recycling center, its owner, and several others.

Cong Nie, a member of the O'Connor law firm, said in a motion filed before the Superior Court last Friday that IPI failed to fulfill its obligations to their law office despite being warned of their possible withdrawal.

If the court needs more information about this, the O'Connor law firm asked to be allowed to submit the information under seal and ex parte. Ex parte refers to a court application brought by one person in the absence of or notification to other parties.

IPI, through Robert O'Connor, is suing FSM Recycling Corp., FSMRC owner Jae Yoon Cha, FSMRC employee Eric Cruz, a former IPI employee Ricky Reyes, and 15 unnamed co-defendants for allegedly conspiring to steal and sell construction materials from IPI's warehouses. IPI is suing the defendants for conversion.

FSMRC, Cha, and Cruz filed counterclaims against IPI for invasion of privacy/false light, and abuse of process. In addition, FSMRC, Cha, and Cruz are suing IPI for business disparagement. They also filed a crossclaim for defamation against Reyes and 15 unnamed persons.

Reyes allegedly prepared a handwritten statement early this year that he and another man would cut about 10 feet of copper wire from spools owned by IPI and sell the wire to Cha and FSMRC.

FSMRC, Cha, and Cruz, through counsel Robert T. Torres, oppose the motion to withdraw without a new substitute lawyer to take over the case.

In the motion to withdraw, Nie said allowing O'Connor law firm to withdraw will not significantly disrupt this case or prejudice the other parties. He pointed out that the case is in its early stage and IPI has filed its answer to counterclaims, while one defendant, Ricky Reyes, has not yet filed an answer.

In defendants' opposition filed last Saturday, Torres said the O'Connor law firm should be required to disclose to the court its reasons to justify its withdrawal.

Torres said the motion does not identify new counsel to substitute, leaving the matter to linger without a lawyer for IPI, who started this lawsuit. He said that, until IPI hires a substitute counsel, the motion should be denied or held in abeyance.

Torres said in this case, FSMRC has prosecuted its counterclaim against IPI, which IPI has answered with the assistance of the O'Connor law firm.

Torres said in the application for a Temporary Restraining Order and preliminary injunction, Robert O'Connor, who is a principal of the O'Connor law firm, is a percipient witness of record who filed a declaration in support of the TRO/preliminary injunction.

A longer version of this story is available at www. saipantribune.com

IPI

From Page 1

chael W. Dotts, filed last Friday a notice of motion to shorten time.

In denying the motion, Manglona said IPI's request is not a stipulation and contains no statement certifying IPI's efforts to resolve the dispute without court action.

Manglona reminded Dotts that he must contact the District Court's clerk's office by telephone and email when requesting immediate court action to avoid calendaring conflicts.

IPI is appealing to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit to reverse Manglona's order last April 23 for IPI to pay its former contractor, Pacific Rim Land Development LLC, $6.8 million, including the principal amount of $5.65 million, for breach of contract.

Pacific Rim, which claims that IPI owes it payment for the work it did on the casino project, is suing IPI and five unnamed alleged co-conspirators for breach of contract (construction and promissory note), and unjust enrichment.

Last Friday, Pacific Rim said it will be able to begin collecting from IPI on the partial summary judgment of $6.8 million, unless the District Court grants IPI's motion to stay proceedings pending appeal.

Dotts said denying the stay will not just force IPI to shut down but will also leave 1,066 people on Saipan jobless.

According to court records, Pacific Rim and IPI entered into a construction contract on Feb. 13, 2018 for the Pacific Rim to build a hotel-casino complex in Garapan, but Pacific Rim eventually stopped work, saying that IPI did not pay it the amounts owed under the contract.

IPI has filed counterclaims against Pacific Rim for promissory fraud, fraud in the inducement as to the promissory note, violation of Consumer Protection Act, and breach of contract.

Last March 17, IPI shut down its casino to comply with Gov. Ralph DLG Torres' directive due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

FIRE

From Page 1

Rescue-1 from Susupe Fire station, Engine-2 from Garapan Fire station and Forestry-3 from the Kagman Fire Station were immediately, dispatched to the location, with the first unit arriving on scene at 2:07pm, Gersonde said.

He said the fire was controlled at 3:05pm and that no one was hurt and treated at the scene for medical complaints in relation to the fire.

Gersonde blames the recent string of wildfires on the extended period of dry weather that the CNMI is currently experiencing.

Last Friday, DFEMS also put out a large brushfire in As Gonno, right next to the Coral Ocean Point. The fire was controlled at around 3pm.

In light of the current dry season, DFEMS has ceased all burning permits until further notice. "Due to extended dry season and lack of personnel due to the response of COVID-19, DFEMS has ceased all burning permits until further notice. We will reevaluate once we experience widespread measurable rain and are cleared from the COVID-19 pandemic," DFEMS said.

QUARANTINE

From Page 1

home in Guam.

"When you have a negative polymerase chain reaction COVID-19 test, you still need to be home-quarantined, meaning that you have to have restriction of movement for 14 days," she said.

DeNorcey stated that an individual who has developed symptoms will be seen by a provider and tested for COVID-19. Guam and the CNMI use the same Gene Xpert Machine, which is a PCR nucleus acid testing.

DeNorcey added that Guam does not accept antibody testing. Antibody testing is meant to check whether a person has already had the virus.

As for incoming travelers to the CNMI, a new directive gives travelers the option to either undergo the 14-day mandatory quarantine or get tested once they reach the quarantine facility, which is the Pacific Islands Club Saipan in San Antonio.

Effective May 18, a travel clearance is not needed for travelers entering the CNMI and does not guarantee the traveler will not be subjected to quarantine processing. Every traveler will be immediately transported to a quarantine site for evaluation, subjected to quarantine and testing within five to seven days of their stay, and monitored daily for COVID-19 symptoms.

To date, the CNMI has a total of 22 confirmed COVID-19 cases with two deaths, 13 recoveries, and seven active cases.

COVID-19 in Guam

One new probable case of COVID-19 was reported to the Department of Public Health and Social Services from May 24–25, 2020. The case tested positive through serology testing at Diagnostic Laboratory Services (DLS). While polymerase chain reaction (PCR) testing indicates current infection, serology testing indicates the presence of antibodies from past infection with SARS-CoV-2, which is the virus that causes COVID-19. Cases that test positive only through serology testing are classified as probable cases. A case investigation will be conducted to determine any epidemiologic links to known cases.

To date, there have been 167 cases in Guam confirmed through COVID-19 testing, with five deaths and 139 released from isolation.

ACS

From Page 1

should be coming in today or late this evening.

"We want to make sure that all the equipment and the standard of care is not being compromised if we open the services now, and those are the factors for the slight delay" said Villagomez.

The idea is to have a specific place where all COVID-19 cases will be handled outside the main hospital, thus enabling the hospital to handle people who do not have COVID-19. The Alternative Care Site will be converted back into a hotel once the CNMI is able to stamp out the coronavirus.

Helios Energy Group is the prime designer, which is the contractor behind the renovation work at the ACS.

To date, the CNMI has 22 confirmed COVID-19 cases with 13 recoveries, two deaths, and seven active cases.

Mass testing on Rota and Tinian

A week after announcing that mass testing for COVID-19 on Rota and Tinian, Esther Muña, Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. chief executive officer, confirmed that, so far, they all got negative results.

On CHCC's official website, a total of 192 individuals on Tinian and 282 individuals on Rota have gotten tested.

Tinian Mayor Edwin P. Aldan stated that on the first day of the mass testing, Tinian tested only around 50 individuals but that number went up days after. "I encourage the community to please come down to the health center and get tested. It's not only for sense of security for the community but also for our family," said Aldan. He himself was tested last May 20 and is waiting for his results.

FDA approves of SolGent test kits

By JUSTINE NAUTA
justine_nauta@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The SolGent test kits that the CNMI has been using to test for COVID-19 has been approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration under an Emergency Use Authorization.

The Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. received the first 20,000 test kits from SolGent in South Korea last April 16. SolGent's test kits are the DiaPlexQ (polymerase chain reaction), a fast and inexpensive technique that amplifies small segments of DNA, so they can be used to detect viruses such as COVID-19 in a shorter time.

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres broke the news about the FDA approval during the governor's media briefing yesterday. "That's something that's a great success for all of us, and if there's any doubt or question regarding the test kits that we got from South Korea, I think this is a good time to also acknowledge what we received yesterday," said Torres.

Esther Muña, CHCC chief executive officer, chimed in to say that since there are a lot of test kits available, CHCC will be strategizing on how they will be using the test kits.

"At the end of the day, there's no question now in terms of reimbursable expense. The test kits were already approved by the Federal Emergency Management Agency" said Patrick Guerrero, the governor's authorized representative.

This means that the expenses that are related to community-based testing (labor, equipment, and testing) will be covered by FEMA moving forward.

Torres earlier said that the goal since Day 1 was to test everybody in the CNMI

Employers encouraged to register online for Phase I of PUA/FPUC implementation

The CNMI Department of Labor is opening the first phase option for employers (businesses, government, other entities) to register their entities online via www.hiremarianas.com in order to provide information needed to help their employees with the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance and the Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation programs.

"We encourage employers to use this portal and register their workforce for PUA/FPUC as expeditiously as possible, at the same time, using such portal will help keep the CNMI community and the thousands affected in the workforce's to be as safe as possible from the spread of COVID- 19 by reducing social contact," said Labor Secretary Vicky Benavente.

Phase I of the CNMI receiving PUA/FPUC is for CNMI employers to register their entities online and provide the following information:

■ Go to www.hiremarianas.com and look for the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance Section;

■ Click on COVID-19 Employer Login;

■ Create a User Account under the Employers and Agent Link;

■ Select the representative type that best describes your company (i.e. Direct Representative of the Organization or Third Party Agents;

■ Enter the Company Identification using the Federal Employer Identification Number

■ or Social Security Number and confirm;

■ Create your Login Information such as a User Name, Password, Security Questions and

■ Responses, Location, Address, Contact Information, Company Information, Company

■ Profile, Etc. and be sure to save when completed.

■ Upon confirmation of your Login Information and Uploading your Entities Information,

■ an email will be sent to you authorizing you to proceed with the process.

When above is secured, you may then start entering the Employee Information needed, these include:

■ Employee Name, Social Security Number, Date of Separation (Furlough, Layoff, Etc.), Date of Hire, Date Last Worked, Employee Recall Date;

■ Enter the Reason for Separation and Explain the Reason for Separation;

■ Enter the Benefit Payments (hourly rate of pay and hours worked per week);

■ Enter/Upload the Notice of Separation Attachment; Continue with entering/uploading information until all affected employees are entered.

Upon completion, CNMI DOL will assign a representative to your entity to verify the information provided and reduce fraud. Once employers provide CNMI DOL with the information needed, the information is verified, and as CNMI DOL completes the training and forms required by the federal government, CNMI DOL will inform the CNMI community of when the registration process for individuals will start.

CNMI DOL upgraded its hiremarianas.com portal, a Virtual One-Stop System used by DOL's Workforce Investment Agency to register, track and manage its clients, to incorporate the modules needed for PUA/FPUC functions. The system is used both regionally and nationally and has advanced security measures with a strong focus on data Confidentiality, Availability, and Integrity.

In the event that employers need alternative means of assistance, are not able to access hiremarianas.com or need more information, email info@puamarianas.com or call one of our PUA/FPUC hotline numbers: (670) 989-9090, (670) 989-9084, (670) 989-9081, (670) 989-9089, (670) 989-9083, or (670) 989-9080. ***(PR)***

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
RFP NO.: DPW20-RFP-006

SUBMISSION DATE: June 30, 2020 • TIME: 10:00 A.M.

"Archaeological Services for Kannat Tabla Road Flood Control and Drainage Project, Saipan"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE TECHNICAL SERVICES DIVISION, DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS, LOCATED ON SECOND FLOOR, OLEAI JOETEN COMMERCIAL CENTER, SAN JOSE, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

A PRE-PROPOSAL Conference WILL BE HELD ON **June 16, 2020 AT 9:00 A.M., LOCAL TIME** AT THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS CONFERENCE ROOM 2nd Floor, Oleai Joeten Commercial Office, Saipan.

QUESTIONS MUST BE MADE IN WRITING TO Anthony A. Camacho, Director of Technical Services Division **NO LATER THAN THE CLOSE OF BUSINESS June 23, 2020.** THESE QUESTIONS WILL BE ANSWERED WITHIN THREE (3) BUSINESS DAYS AND WILL BE SHARED WITH ALL PROPOSERS.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/s/ **JAMES A. ADA**
SECRETARY OF PUBLIC WORKS

/s/ **FRANCISCO C. AGUON**
ACTING DIRECTOR, P&S

/s/ **VIRGINIA C. VILLAGOMEZ**
Governor's Authorized Rep. (GAR)

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONS LICENSING BOARD
P.O. Box 502078, Bldg., 1242 Pohnpei Court, Capitol Hill, Saipan, MP 96950
Tel No: (670) 664-4809 Fax: (670) 664-4814 I Email: cnmi@cnmibpl-hcplb.net
Website: cnmibpl-hcplb.net

Pursuant to P.L. 8-41, Section 11, Governor Ralph DLG. Torres and Lt. Governor Arnold I. Palacios, through the Health Care Professions Licensing Board (HCPLB) are hereby giving notice that it will hold its regular monthly board meeting on ***Friday, May 29, 2020 at 8am*** on Saipan. The meeting will be held at the Office of the Governor's Conference Room, Capitol Hill.

AGENDA

I. Meeting Call to Order
II. Determination of Quorum
III. Review and Adoption of Agenda
IV. Review and Adoption of Minutes (01/22/2020 and 02/21/20)
V. Public Comments
VI. Chairperson's Report
- EAGI Public Hearing for Dr. Martin Rohringer and Dr. Glenda George to HCPLB Board

VII. Director's Report
- Office operation during the COVID-19 lockdown – Update
- FSMB Virtual Annual House of Delegates Meeting – Sunday, May 3, 2020
- Fund Status Report
- Monitoring Practice Report by Dr. Sabino and Dr. Bellama – Update

VIII. Investigator's Report
IX. Communications from the Governor's Office & Legislature
A. Governor's Office
B. Legislature
X. Old Business
XI. New Business
XII. Pending Applications for Board's Review
A. New Applications
- L.Collins – Clinical Social Worker
- A.Seby – Physician
- A.Pasatiempo – Physician
- H.Yoshioka – Physician

B. Renewal Applications
XIII. Miscellaneous Business
XIV. Executive Session: The Board may vote to meet in executive session to consult with Counsel on pending or anticipated legal matters.
- Status Update on N. Krum's Hearing Case

XV. Announcements
A. Next Meeting Date
B. Adjournment of Meeting

/s/ Theodore R. Parker, R.Ph., MPH
Chairman

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

JVA No. 20-035
Opening Date: Monday, May 11, 2020
Closing Date: Monday, June 01, 2020

Trades Technician-Operator
(Diesel Power Plant)

DUTIES: Under the overall supervision of the Power Division Manager of his/her designee. This class specification represents only the core areas of responsibilities; specific position assignments will vary depending on the needs of Power Generation. Responsible for the safe and efficient operation of all plant equipment and machinery including, but not limited to, generators, operation of valves, plant production operations, and unloading of diesel fuel tank trucks to storage tanks. Follows all safety and operations procedures during operations and maintenance activities. Responsible for monitoring all Plant systems as assigned. Will act as the responsible person when working without supervision. Responsible for entire plant during operating periods. May direct and/or instruct all other personnel as required during all other periods. May be on call for emergency response. Primary duties are as an TRADES TECHNICIAN OPERATOR for a diesel engine power plant. Operates, controls, monitors and inspects generators, switchgears, motor controls, transformers, protection relays, circuit breakers, compressors, RO system and other associated equipment. Performs analysis, maintenance, operations, installations and/or repairs of 8 megawatt, 13 megawatt Mitsubishi-MAN diesel engines to include engine auxiliary equipment in the main Power Plant and provide the same services on the small Power Plant with 2.5 megawatt Electromotive Division (EMD) units. Ensures work is within Original Equipment Manufacturing (OEM) engineering specifications and quality levels. Takes readings from meters, gauges and computers at established intervals, reads and interprets data to take corrective steps as necessary. Inspects records and log book entries, and communicates with other plant personnel in order to assess equipment-operating status. Performs systems operations to regulate and coordinate transmission load, frequencies and line voltages. Identifies potential issues and operational concerns; performs operational inspections and symptomatic maintenance; provides status reports; evaluates and implements solutions and corrective actions under emergency situations.

LOCATION : **Power Generation, SAIPAN, Northern Mariana Islands, USA.**
SALARY : $28,350.40 Per Annum, Non-Exempt
POSITIONS : Six (6)
CONTRACT : Not Contracted

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS: High School Diploma, General Education Diploma, or Adult Basic Education. Considerable knowledge in operation, repair, and maintenance of power generating and/or industrial equipment/facilities. Must demonstrate having had (A) 4 years of increasingly responsible experience in a diesel engine power plant operations and (B) those 4 years of increasingly responsible experience are to be performing operator duties. Knowledge of: Applicable Federal, Commonwealth and local laws, codes, regulations and/or ordinances; Mechanical and electrical principles, practices and operations of power plant equipment. Customer service principles; Mathematical concepts; Inventory maintenance practices; Taking equipment readings and maintaining reading data; Inspection procedures; Safety procedures and safe work practices; Modern office technology. Skill in: Performing inspections and analyzing system and equipment data; Interpreting and applying applicable laws, codes, regulations and standard operating procedures; Monitoring plant equipment and making adjustments; Identifying electrical and mechanical issues and recommending or implementing solutions; Initiating requests and trouble calls and providing assistance; Preparing and updating activity logs and status reports; Utilizing a computer and relevant software applications; Utilizing communication an interpersonal skills as applied to interaction with coworkers, supervisor, the general public, and others to sufficiently exchange or convey information and to receive work direction. Able to lift and carry heavy objects of 45 pounds and over, climb ladders, reach above the shoulders, stand, sit, crawl and kneel for prolonged periods and perform repeated bending. Recognize color codes, operate cranes and motor vehicles. Occasionally use solvents, de-greasing agents, or other chemical agents, and be assigned to protracted or irregular hours of work; exposed to dust, oil, grease, constant or excessive noise, vibration, and smoke and gas fumes. Work closely with others and/or alone depending on assigned daily activities. Must be available to work a 24/7 rotation shift to include weekends, holidays and on-call. Applicants may be tested. Subject to pre-employment drug test.

You may submit your CUC Employment Application and/or resume at the Human Resources office located on the 3rd Floor of the Joeten Dandan Building on Saipan, from Monday to Friday, 7:30am – 4:30pm. Applicants on the island of Tinian and Rota can drop it off at the Tinian and Rota Administration office. Application and resume can also be e-mailed to: employment.applications@cucgov.org

Skeletal remains found in As Gonno

On Sunday, May 24, 2020, at about 5:47pm, the CNMI Department of Public Safety received a 911 call reporting a discovery of human remains in the village of As Gonno on Saipan. Officers met with the Historic Preservation Office, who confirmed that the remains are not from the ancient/war era.

Police learned that the owner of the land was doing farm work when they felt something was out of the ordinary. The individual then walked around their property and discovered what looked like human remains. They immediately contacted the police.

The skeletal remains were found in a part of the property that had just experienced a grass fire a few weeks prior. Observation on the bones that were dug up revealed that there were roots growing in-between and around the bones suggesting that the remains had been there undisturbed for a couple of years.

At this time the department is unable to confirm the age, gender, and/or nationality of the remains. This case remains ongoing and if you have any information that could aid the investigation, no matter how insignificant it may seem, call 911, the Criminal Investigation Bureau at 664-9042, or if you wish to remain anonymous, you may call the CNMI Crime Stoppers hotline at 234-7272. ***(PR)***

Project to introduce a coconut rhinoceros beetle disease in Guam gets $240K grant

The Office of Insular Affairs of the U.S. Department of the Interior has awarded $239,994 to the University of Guam College of Natural and Applied Sciences in response to a grant proposal titled "Establishment of Self-sustaining Biological Control of Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle Biotype G in Micronesia" submitted by Aubrey Moore, an entomologist at the University of Guam.

Part of the funding will be used for partial support of an existing project to implement self-sustaining control of coconut rhino beetles throughout Guam by introducing an insect disease caused by a naturally occurring insect virus that infects only rhino beetles. This virus is called Oryctes rhinoceros nudivirus, or OrNV.

Different strains of OrNV have been very effective in providing long-lasting control of rhino beetles on many Pacific islands. Typically, after the virus is introduced into the CRB population, damage to coconut palms and other palms falls to very low levels within a few months and stays at those low levels indefinitely. The beetle has already been found on Rota in the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas and immediate measures were done to eradicate this invasive insect.

In this 2009 file photo, University of Guam entomologist Aubrey Moore feeds a solution containing the naturally occurring insect virus OrNV to coconut rhinoceros beetles. UNIVERSITY OF GUAM

The other part of the grant funding will be used to pay the salary of James Grasela, an insect pathologist who has spent his career finding ways to control pest insects with insect diseases instead of poisoning them with insecticides. Grasela has been working under a contract at the University of Guam for the past two years under a previous DOI-OIA grant. He has screened OrNV strains collected from several locations in the Asia-Pacific region and has found two that have potential for controlling the biotype, CRB-G, causing so much damage on Guam.

For more information regarding research on the CRB and other insects conducted by scientists at the University of Guam, visit https://www.uog.edu/wptrc/entomology.

For detailed information on the recent grant award, download Moore's grant proposal from https://github.com/aubreymoore/2020-DOI-CRB-Biocontrol/blob/master/doi_proposal.pdf. ***(PR)***

Normal office hours at Settlement Fund

Beginning yesterday, May 26, 2020, the Settlement Fund office resumed normal office hours from 8am to 5pm daily, except for holidays. The window walk-out service will be available during regular business hours. Members who wish to have an in-person meeting with Fund staff will be required to make an appointment. Note that social distancing will be strictly enforced and we require all members wear a mask for window service and appointments. Anyone who refuses or fails to comply with the safe distancing and mask requirement will not be served.

The Settlement Fund staff remain available to assist members by phone, fax, and email.

Contact Information for the Settlement Fund:

Tel: (670) 322-3863 Fax: (670) 664-8080 Email: info@nmisf.com. ***(PR)***

Division of Energy reopens with limited resumption of programs

The Division of Energy has reopened its office at Building 1337 Ascencion Drive on Capital Hill and the limited resumption of program services beginning yesterday, May 26, 2020, from 7:30am to 4:30pm, except during lunch hours, weekends, and legal holidays. The Energy office will remain open during austerity Fridays. However, before visiting the Energy office, we strongly and highly recommend to first contact the Energy Office at (670) 664-4480/01 to schedule an appointment.

In addition, the Division of Energy will implement necessary measures and follow current and available government health and safety guidance and resources to protect the community and our staff from the significant and continuing imminent threat of harm to our people and environment posed by the COVID-19 and to stop the spread.

Additionally, the Division of Energy also wishes to announce program information updates regarding the following programs:

STATE ENERGY PROGRAM

Appliance Rebate Program

The Division of Energy is granting time-extensions to all residents of Saipan, Tinian, and Rota for the redemption of fiscal year 2020 Appliance Rebate Vouchers issued this year as follows:

Island Location Voucher Redemption Expiration Date:

- Saipan residents June 8, 2020 – ALL VOUCHERS
- Tinian residents June 23, 2020 – ALL VOUCHERS
- Rota residents June 23, 2020 – ALL VOUCHERS

Appliance Rebate Vouchers must be redeemed and processed on or before the respective dates stated above. All Appliance Rebate Vouchers that remain unused after the respective dates above will be deemed null and void.

No further extensions will be granted due to the end date of the SEP grant's period of performance of Sept. 30, 2020.

WEATHERIZATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The Division of Energy wishes to inform all approved applicants awaiting program services and applicants with pending applications are requested to contact Alexandro M. Castro, Jr., Residential Energy auditor, at (670) 664-4481/4484, for additional information regarding the status of applications, or other program information.

The Division of Energy will announce additional information and updates on program services once it becomes available. ***(PR)***

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

May 27, 1999

Teno: Crackdown on prostitution

Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio yesterday issued fresh calls to police and immigration authorities to clamp down on illegal flesh trade amid reports that prostitutes are back in the main tourist district of Garapan. Residents and businessmen in Garapan have expressed concern of the growing presence of prostitutes which they say tarnishes the image of the area as a wholesome entertainment destination for visitors. "We don't tolerate the existence of prostitution," Tenorio told reporters. "We want to see this discontinued."

MVA salutes employees in tourism business

Employees who have served in various tourism-related business for 10 years or more will be given commendations by the Marianas Visitors Authority for their valuable contribution in the growth of the tourism industry. The recognition day and awarding of winners in the Chef Competition will be held on May 29, 1999 at the American Memorial Park where the first food festival on the island is being held. According to Marianas Visitors Authority deputy managing director Vicky Benavente, next year's food festival will be a bigger event as members of the Japan Saipan Travel Association have pledged to assist in promoting the affair.

May 27, 2004

40 San Antonio students mark new milestone

"Technology leads you to a better education," was the theme for the graduation ceremony held at the San Antonio Elementary School Tuesday evening. In line with this, four graduating students took the stage to present their 6th grade video diary. Kelsey Lizama, Antonette Castro, Joreen Pangelinan, and Kiara Mafnas took turns with the microphone while clips of the students flashed on the screen. The graduates filled the grounds with laughter and excitement as they recalled the fun times they had in their last year in San Antonio Elementary. PTA president Sia M. Dela Cruz, Erik Evangelista, vice principal of Koblerville Elementary School; and PSS Finance Director Richard Waldo presented awards to the students.

Palacios opposes minimum wage hike

Rep. Norman S. Palacios questioned the timing of calls for minimum wage increase in the Commonwealth as revenue collections continue to drop due to possible pullout of the garment industry by 2005. Palacios said the weak economy and the vulnerability of the local garment industry pose a danger to the already dwindling revenue generation of the CNMI, thus a minimum wage hike would be disastrous to the Commonwealth. "Whether the wage hike is imposed locally or federally, it would not really matter. The effect would be the same: our economy would suffer tremendously," said the congressman, who chairs the House Committee on Ways and Means. Palacios stressed that there would be additional revenue shortfalls if minimum wage hikes were imposed on the garment industry, which is already struggling with the ramifications of the 2005 free trade rules eliminating quotas on garment exports to the United States.

May 27, 2005

GCA's Sablan tops Junior High

Keith Jason F. Sablan graduated as valedictorian in this year's 19th Grace Christian Junior High Commencement exercises held at the school's auditorium last Thursday night. Sablan bested 19 other junior high school graduates to take top honors. Mary Cris P. Ta was the class salutatorian. In their respective speeches, Sablan gave an advice to his fellow graduates to never stop learning because "education will not stop today." Ta thanked her family, teachers and friends for the support throughout her junior high school years. She thanked the school for the solid learning she has acquired.

House members OKs retirement protection bill

Twelve present members of the 18-member House of Representatives have approved the passage of an initiative prohibiting the enactment of laws that create unfunded liabilities to the retirement system. The lawmakers passed House Legislative Initiative 14-11, which aims to amend Article 3, Section 20 of the CNMI Constitution "to protect and to ensure the integrity of the government retirement system." Rep. Joseph Deleon Guerrero, who authored the measure, said that in light of the CNMI government's decision to opt out of the federal social security retirement system, the CNMI retirement pension may in fact be an employee's only source of income upon retirement.

SIS hosts split graduation

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Anika Snyder receives a lei from her aunt in New York that is put on her by her mother.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Saipan International School was determined to give its graduating seniors a more traditional graduation ceremony despite current COVID-19 directives in place so they opted to split the ceremony into two parts.

With social distancing as the "new normal," the SIS administration worked to host a traditional commemoration ceremony for its 19 graduating seniors while also remaining compliant with social distancing measure. That meant splitting the graduating class into two batches and hosting two separate ceremonies that concluded with a parade.

SIS had nine students in one group and 10 in the other, with each student seated 10 feet apart from other members of their group. Additionally, everyone who entered the campus had their temperature taken and filled out a health screening form.

To make this year's graduation even more unique, SIS' graduating class was led by two valedictorians and two salutatorians. This year's valedictorians were Anika Snyder and Malika Miyawaki, who tied with a grade point average of 4.36. Salutatorians Eunseo No and Sangyoon Lee tied with a GPA of 4.29.

In her speech, Miyawaki encouraged her classmates to persevere despite the many challenges life has thrown and will throw at them. "There will be many more challenges and, of course, mistakes, to come but we are sure it will be all worth it in the end. For everyone who has a goal, don't give up. Personally, no matter what challenges I faced, I always tried my best to beat it. I struggled because I had so many things I wanted to do. I wanted to do well in school, play sports, participate in every fundraiser, spend time with friends, and earn money to support my family. My struggles, despite being demanding, forced me to precisely plan my days. Successfully doing all of this made me realize that if you just try, you can do it all!"

Snyder mirrored Miyawaki's speech and said that it is the challenges in life that makes a person stronger. "Saipan endured Typhoon Soudelor, [Super] Typhoon Yutu, and now COVID-19. But we did not give up and we will never give up. These challenges, both in the past and in the present, have made us the strongest and most durable group we know. The challenges our futures hold for us is unknown, but we, and everyone here today, knows that the Class of 2020 will persevere through each and every one of them," she said.

Receiving an honors cord.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

No ended her salutatorian speech with encouragement for her peers that there are better days and to treasure every moment. "I hope everyone treasures every moment and strives for a better tomorrow, for what everyone wants to become," she said.

Awards

- Malika Miyawaki: Valedictorian, Athletics and Sportsmanship, English Language, composition, and literature award.
- Anika Snyder: Valedictorian, Science Award
- Eunseo No: Salutatorian, World Language Award
- Sangyoon Lee: Salutatorian, Mathematics award, team captain and most valuable player in non-sport competitions, including debate, math court, Mock Trial, and Model United Nations, Board of Directors award.
- Sally Lai: Social Studies award
- Anna Qian: exemplary in visual and or performing arts
- Jon Paul Sablan: Athletics Sportsmanship

Mount Carmel School aims to resume face-to-face classes in new school year

File photo shows a Mount Carmel School class.
MCS

Mount Carmel School announced this week that it is aiming to safely resume face-to-face classes for the upcoming 2020-2021 school year.

"The safety of our school family is of paramount importance," said school president Dr. Galvin Deleon Guerrero. "That is why we have been working closely with the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and other educational professionals to develop safety protocols to resume face-to-face classes next year."

Over the summer, school officials will work to ensure that the campus and classrooms will be safe for everyone. This will include retrofitting campus facilities to protect students and employees, regularly cleaning and disinfecting common surfaces, securing appropriate personal protective equipment for employees, training faculty and staff in mitigation and response protocols, exploring various options to hold face-to-face sessions while maintaining social distancing, and updating standard operating procedures to align with best practices in health and medicine.

The school also announced that it would improve its current online learning program, should student safety require a hybrid approach that blends online learning with face-to-face learning. "When we transitioned to online learning this year, we were blessed by our robust digital infrastructure that was effectively utilized by many teachers who had been certified, in one way or another, in education technology," Deleon Guerrero noted. However, he said there is always room for improvement. "If we continue online learning, we will increase interaction between teachers and students by expanding the number of live synchronous sessions held."

In addition, the school's teachers are currently reviewing a wide range of e-textbooks to use next year and are exploring other online and digital learning tools to make online learning easier and more engaging for students. The school's administration is also working with the CNMI Public School System Federal Programs Office to use funds from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act to acquire additional digital equipment, upgrade the school's network, and provide training for teachers.

In addition to these measures, the school highlighted several initiatives to help families struggling financially. These initiatives include further discounting the Early Bird Registration from $200 to $100 per child (normally $400) for students registered by July 1; reducing monthly tuition by extending payment plans from 10 months to 12 months; continuing the school's scholarship and financial aid program; and not raising tuition levels for the upcoming school year.

To learn more about Mount Carmel School, visit www.mountcarmelsaipan.com. ***(PR)***

PACIFIC ISLANDS CLUB SAIPAN

We are seeking for high energy individuals with a positive, can do attitude.
Pacific Islands Club, Saipan is inviting qualified, U.S. workers to apply for the following positions:

(1) ACCOUNT ANALYST
Associates Degree in Accounting. 24 months work experience is required. Must be able to work flexible shifts, weekends and holiday. Able to lift up to 50 lbs.

(3) ASSISTANT RESTAURANT MANAGER
High school diploma or equivalent, 12 months of work experience. Must be proficient with the use of Microsoft Office software and the use of Micros point-of-sale systems. Must be able to work evenings, weekends and holidays. Hotel/Resort experience a plus.

(2) BAKER
High School Diploma or equivalent with no more than 6 months experience. Knowledge and experience in hotel/resort as baker is an advantage, must be able to work flexible hours including weekends and holidays. The employee must regularly lift and/or move up to 10-25 pounds. Apprenticeship from recognized technical school preferred.

(1) BARTENDER
High School Diploma, Must be able to work flexible shifts (weekends, holidays, night and days) able to stand long periods of time. Possess a strong knowledge in service standards, guest relations an etiquette. At least 12 months experience, must be over 21 years old.

(1) BUILDING MAINTENANCE
Must have a High School diploma or equivalent. No more than 24 months of work experience as building maintenance. Must be able to work evenings, weekends and holidays. Must be able to lift up to 50lbs regularly. Safely climb ladders while carrying up to 40lbs. Able to stand, walk, sit, climb or balance, stoop, crawl kneel work at height up to 100 feet. Work under extreme weather conditions. Solid understanding of technical aspects of plumbing, carpentry, electrical systems.

(17) BUILDING MAINTENANCE
Must have a High School diploma or equivalent. No more than 24 months of work experience as building maintenance. Must be able to work evenings, weekends and holidays. Must be able to lift up to 50lbs regularly. Safely climb ladders while carrying up to 40lbs. Able to stand, walk, sit, climb or balance, stoop, crawl kneel work at height up to 100 feet. Work under extreme weather conditions. Solid understanding of technical aspects of plumbing, carpentry, electrical systems.

(7) CHEF DE PARTIE
High School or equivalent. No more than 12 months' experience for supervisor level. Able to work flexible shifts (weekends, holidays, days and nights) including inclement weather. Knowledge of international cuisine. Completion of apprenticeship is preferred.

(17) COOK
Knowledge and experience in hotel/resort as a cook is an advantage. 12 months work experience. Must be able to lift and/or move up to 10-25 pounds. Must be able to work flexible shifts, weekends and holidays.

(1) ENTERTAINMENT CREW/HOST
High school diploma or equivalent. 12 months work experienced. Required to work holiday, weekends, day and shift as needed. Able to work outdoors for periods of time. Ability to host into an entertainer. Ability to interact effectively and make connections with people different age groups. Experienced emcee or host for weddings, hotel, resorts and similar settings.

(9) FOOD & BEVERAGE SUPERVISOR
High School diploma. No more than 12 months' experience in supervisory level. Able to work weekends, holiday and flexible shifts.

(2) LIFEGUARD
High School diploma or equivalent, 3 months work experienced. Must be a certified lifeguard. Proficient in Microsoft, detail oriented, flexible to work different shifts including weekends and holidays. Due to demographics of visitors to Saipan, Bi-lingual in English-Korean or English-Chinese is preferred.

(1) NIGHT AUDITOR
Associate in Accounting is required and no more than 24 months' work experience. Must have business knowledge on basic functions of debits and credits; knowledge on hotel-related systems particularly on front office systems and point-of-sale systems of the hotel industry; strong knowledge of excel and word; and must be knowledgeable in using opera (property management system), micros simphony, and oracle hospitality reporting and analytics; familiarity on how the hotel settlement system works.

(1) RESERVATION SUPERVISOR
High School diploma or equivalent. No more than 12 months experience working supervisor experience preferably in hospitality (Reservation or Front Office). Excellent verbal and written communication skills. Excellent in customer service skills including dealing with patrons/tour vendors. Excellent organization skills and attention to detail. Proficient with Microsoft office site and hotel reservation system preferably Opera. Able to work flexible shift including weekends, holidays and evening. Bilingual is preferred due to market segment (Korean-English).

PIC applications are available at the PIC Security Desk by the Loading Dock/Employee Entrance.
Incomplete applications will NOT be accepted or considered.
PIC is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
Volume XXX, Issue No. 104
Published daily at 2/F JP Center,
Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, CNMI
Mailing Address: PMB 34, Box 10001, Saipan, MP, 96950
Jayvee L. Vallejera EDITOR
jayvee_vallejera@saipantribune.com
Mark Rabago ASSOCIATE EDITOR
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
MEMBER
The Associated Press
Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

China's economic power cannot come at the expense of freedom

Over Memorial Day weekend, we reflected on the brave actions of those who died in battle so that we might live free. But it's also fitting for us to consider the moral causes of our time. One such cause is playing out across the Pacific in the metropolis called Hong Kong.

If that island city seems like a distant land worthy only of someone else's concern, it might be because it is easy to lose perspective while sitting inside our own borders. The truth is that our economic strength, along with the future of a peace we can thrive in, are tied to a contest of ideas on the world's stage. And within that contest, we have ceded much to China in recent decades without gaining the ground we once thought possible.

China was granted admission to the World Trade Organization in the waning days of the Clinton administration under a similar belief that dominated the thinking of the free world when China was handed control of Hong Kong just a few days before July 4, 1997. That belief was that as China modernized and found prosperity by opening its economy, its political system would follow along and open up as well. Back in those heady days, some believed that "one country, two systems" would inevitably lead toward the dominance of the Hong Kong system—a system moving toward real democracy.

China did make some strides in that direction, including loosening its one-child policy. But, particularly in recent years, China's tendencies to crack down on its people have proved resilient. A new national security law to be extended over Hong Kong that was announced over the past week is just one among the latest examples. Others include arresting peaceful democracy advocates in Hong Kong and targeting the Muslim community in western China.

So we stand with Sen. Ted Cruz and others in our nation's capital in pushing back. We support targeted sanctions aimed at Chinese officials who would crush dissent against the regime and support for democracy. And we believe there should be leadership on the presidential level to ensure the world knows the United States stands with those who are demanding their own freedom. Such leadership will be noticed in Beijing, and it will be noticed in corporate boardrooms across American, a place where many decisions have been made over the past few decades that have led to a transfer of technology that has built China's modern economic base.

We also believe the United States should rally Great Britain and other allies to the cause. We are witnessing the end

See CHINA'S on Next Page

Rush to reopen is putting workers at risk

By ROBERT B. REICH
Tribune News Service

Former U.S. Secretary of Labor Robert B. Reich is a professor of public policy at the University of California, Berkeley, and the author of The System: Who Rigged It, How We Fix It. *He blogs at www.robertreich.org.*

Most of Europe and all 50 of America's states are in various stages of "reopening." But why, exactly?

The pandemic is still with us. After the first tentative steps to ease the lockdown in Germany—the most successful large European country in halting the spread of the virus thanks to massive testing—the disease has shown signs of spreading faster.

At least Germany is opening slowly, as is the rest of the EU.

By contrast, the United States—with the highest number of deaths and most haphazard response to COVID-19 of any advanced nation—is opening chaotically, each state on its own. Some are lifting restrictions overnight.

Researchers expect the reopenings to cause thousands of additional deaths.

Two weeks after Texas Gov. Greg Abbott began reopening the state's economy, Texas experienced the single highest rise in cases since the beginning of the pandemic. Since Nebraska reopened on May 4, COVID-19 cases in Colfax County alone have surged 1,390%, according to The Washington Post.

Experts warn that Dallas, Houston, Florida's Gold Coast, the state of Alabama and other places in the South that have rapidly reopened their economies are in danger of a second wave of coronavirus infections over the next month.

On May 18, Ford Motor Company reopened its large North American assembly plants. On May 19, Ford closed and then reopened a Chicago plant twice in less than 24 hours after two workers tested positive for COVID-19. On Wednesday, Ford temporarily shut its truck plant in Dearborn, Mich., after an employee tested positive, then promptly resumed operations.

Why "reopen" so abruptly, when COVID-19 continues to claim lives?

The main reason given is to get the economy moving again. But this begs the question of why an economy exists in the first place, other than to promote the well-being of people within it.

Ford's plants are vital to its profitability, and Ford's profitability is important to jobs in the Midwest. But surely the well-being of Ford workers, their families, the people of Chicago and Dearborn and others in the Midwest are more important.

A related argument is that workers are clamoring to return to their jobs. "People want to get back to work," Donald Trump has asserted repeatedly since March. Fox News Channel host Sean Hannity claims people are "dying to get back to work," seemingly unaware of the irony of his words.

Polls suggest otherwise. Americans whose jobs require them to leave home express trepidation about doing so; nearly 60% fear exposing their families to COVID-19.

Many Americans must return to work because they need the money, but this doesn't have to be the case. Rich economies can support their people for years if necessary. During World War II, America shut down most of its economy for nearly four years.

The obstacle right now is a lack of political will to provide such support, at least until enough testing and tracing provide reasonable evidence the pandemic is contained.

Although nearly half of U.S. households report that they've lost employment income since mid-March, according to a Census Bureau survey, the extra jobless benefits enacted by Congress are only now starting to trickle out. Trump and Republican Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell refuse to extend them beyond July 31, when they're scheduled to end.

Meanwhile, states are denying benefits to anyone whose company has called them back.

Finally, Trump and his enablers argue that reopening is a matter of "freedom." He has called on citizens to "liberate" their states from public health restrictions, and Fox News personalities have decried what they call denials of "basic freedoms."

Armed protesters have descended on the Michigan state capitol demanding the "freedom" to work. At the Kentucky statehouse, protesters shouted, "We want to work!" and "We're free citizens!"

But the supposed "freedom" to work is a cruel joke when people are forced to choose between putting food on the table and risking their lives. It's the same perverse ideology that put workers in harm's way in the dawn of the industrial age, when robber barons demanded that workers be "free" to work in dangerous factories 12 hours a day.

In truth, there is no good reason to reopen when the pandemic is still raging—not getting the economy moving again, or workers clamoring to return to work, or the cost of extended income support, or because workers should be "free" to endanger themselves.

Let's be clear. The pressure to reopen the economy is coming from businesses that want to return to profitability, and from Trump, who wants to run for re-election in an economy that appears to be recovering.

Neither is reason enough.

EDITORIAL POLICY Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Business safeguards soften public reluctance about reopenings

By MICHAEL SMOLENS
The San Diego Union-Tribune

For weeks, the push to further reopen the economy has been met with a big question: Is the public ready?

If the lines outside tribal casinos this week are any indication, the answer may be yes. Granted, the casinos were operating at considerably less than normal capacity to allow for social distancing, but the enthusiastic response to their reopening was unmistakable.

Whether that's pent-up demand that will subside, or whether other businesses such as restaurants will be greeted similarly when they reopen, remains to be seen.

The county Board of Supervisors and Mayor Kevin Faulconer want to find out sooner rather than later.

San Diego is moving deeper into the second of the state's four stages for reopening, which allows, among other things, restaurants and retail shops to provide inside service.

A majority of supervisors, supported by the mayor, have further asked Gov. Gavin Newsom to essentially green-light San Diego's jump to Stage 3. That would pave the way for hair salons, fitness centers and other businesses to open.

Despite the early casino experience and exuberance of many public officials to get things going again, there's always the risk of moving too fast for the public.

After all, several national polls have concluded that the public is in a cautious mindset about reopening of the economy amid the COVID-19 crisis, perhaps more so than the politicians who want to move more quickly.

What's often not reflected or emphasized in polls is government insistence on various levels of new protocols aimed at keeping patrons and employees safe. This isn't about simply going back to business as it was before.

The website FiveThirtyEight, which analyzes polling data, a couple of weeks ago reported that a handful of surveys essentially had the same result—"Most Americans believe it's too soon to reopen."

It's no surprise that when it comes to life-and-death health concerns vs. the economy, strong majorities side with the former.

National pollster and political analyst Scott Rasmussen suggests this is a false choice and the public's view is more nuanced about reopening and staying safe. The notion of introducing safeguards changes the equation, he said.

First, a poll he conducted nearly two weeks ago showed similar trends as others, Rasmussen noted in his regular column in the Deseret News in Salt Lake City. Twenty-three percent of voters surveyed said government has gone too far in shutting things down. Yet, 71 percent disagreed, with 35 percent saying it hasn't gone far enough and 36 percent saying it struck the right balance.

"One might conclude that voters remain committed to maintaining the lockdowns," he wrote. "Indeed, that's the way much of the media defines the public mood."

But in that same poll, 60 percent of voters said that every business that establishes safe social-distancing protocols should be allowed to reopen, while 26 percent disagreed.

"Every business!" he emphasized. "Not just a chosen few."

Rasmussen reiterated a common caution about polls—are they asking the right question?

He didn't see contradictions in public opinion in this.

"The bottom line is that many voters are ready to end formal, government-imposed, lockdowns," he concluded. "But they are still demanding a strong societal commitment to social distancing and appropriate health protocols."

In California, residents appeared ready to move on and reopen, but supported an incremental approach, according to a SurveyUSA poll conducted May 18-20. A strong majority, 77 percent, favored relaxing coronavirus restrictions "gradually, region by region." Only 17 percent supported reopening all at once.

Fifty-five percent said the stay-at-home orders should be loosened only when targets are met.

Those majorities essentially favor the approach of Newsom, so it's no surprise he received high marks for how he has responded to the coronavirus crisis.

Nearly 70 percent of Californians said they approved (36 percent) or strongly approved (32 percent) of his performance on this.

They give county health officials across the state an even stronger rating—46 percent approved and 30 percent strongly approved.

Nationally, a survey commissioned by the Big Cities Health Coalition in April showed four out of five Americans believed stay-at-home orders helped keep them and their communities safer during the pandemic. The coalition also reported that a study estimated 200,000 COVID-19 deaths and 2.1 million hospitalizations were avoided because of stay-at-home policies.

The estimates were calculated by the Urban Health Collaborative at the Drexel University Dornsife Public School of Health using a model published by The New York Times.

In a breakdown of metropolitan regions, the study concluded that in San Diego County coronavirus restrictions saved 13,172 lives and avoided 120,579 hospitalizations over a 45-day period. As of Wednesday, the county reported 230 deaths and 1,155 hospitalizations.

On top of that, there are signs the outbreak has stabilized in San Diego and across much of California. That's all good news, but the reality is it could have been much better.

A study by Columbia University researchers released this week estimated that 36,000 lives could have been saved in the United States if social-distancing policies had been enacted a week earlier.

And though the trends are positive, people are still becoming gravely ill and dying.

Californians remain wary. Eighty-five percent told SurveyUSA they were still concerned about the coronavirus, with 43 percent "somewhat" and 42 percent "extremely" so.

The extremely concerned group grew to nearly half when asked about a second wave of the outbreak, which health experts say is almost surely to come.

A lot of people may support businesses reopening with additional safeguards, but that doesn't guarantee they'll be visiting them in droves.

Living in fear: An unacceptable risk for schoolchildren

By AMY ANDERSON AND JONATHAN BUTCHER
THE HERITAGE FOUNDATION

Will your neighborhood school open on schedule in the fall? The answer should vary by location, but some headline-grabbing declarations are prolonging the uncertainty for families and students.

And uncertainty leads to fear—an infectious state of mind best treated with a dose of common sense.

Special-interest groups encouraged educators to "scream bloody murder" if collective bargaining and significant new federal spending are not included in reopening plans. Neither of these conditions guarantee safe conditions for schools, and spreading panic is not a useful exercise.

Meanwhile, Dr. Anthony Fauci's role is to encourage caution, so no one should fault the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Disease director for explaining the risks and rewards for different decisions. Yet this allows the media to take any conclusive statement and use it to prove their case. When Fauci says a vaccine is "the ultimate solution" and won't be ready by the fall, some are quick to say schools should remain closed.

However, he also said, "Situations regarding school will be very different in one region versus another." Local educators and health practitioners, then, must be the ones to decide when schools reopen—and make decisions based not on national averages but on the circumstances in their area.

Parents and educators should take an additional step and make their school's default position one that is ready to open on schedule, unless evidence suggests there are compelling health reasons not to do so.

Schools should monitor updates to health guidelines and revise their operations and policies accordingly. For example, instead of asking students that have a fever to stay home for 24 hours after the fever breaks, he or she should stay home for three days, consistent with Centers for Disease Control guidelines. Schools also should plan to update their guidance as we learn more about the virus.

State lawmakers should not order school closures across the whole state unless data support a statewide concern. Superintendents and school boards should not close an entire district or individual school unless there is a significant outbreak in the immediate area affecting normal operations or a large percentage of students with COVID-19 warrants such action.

If selective dismissal or closure is necessary, the district should provide the highest level of disinfection and sanitizing available prior to school resuming. District officials should continue to work with the local public health departments to determine safe and appropriate resumption of school activities in the event of a dismissal or closure.

Likewise, families and educators should plan now for athletics, fine arts and extracurricular activities to resume and governing bodies should allow additional time in the summer to make up for lost instruction. If there is a significant outbreak, then school officials should consider limitations rather than widespread cancellation of events. For example, schools could limit athletic and fine arts events to student participants, school personnel, and their family members.

Students have already lost so much during the spring lockdown. For the physical and social-emotional well-being of students, enriching activities such as these should not be lost to fear. Administrators should consult with doctors, school nurses and health experts to determine appropriate modifications if a significant outbreak occurs.

Should there be a surge in infections, parents have the right to protect their children. Lawmakers and school districts should carefully suspend truancy laws to accommodate a parent's choice to keep a student home due to health concerns. Students with special needs or underlying health conditions should be reasonably accommodated through virtual or online learning if the situation is warranted.

Fauci told lawmakers that "we should be humble about what we don't know," which is sound advice. No one knows what the mortality rate or number of infections will be in August, but we should base our plans for resuming life on the idea that we will resume school in the fall unless there are compelling reasons not to.

A return to school is necessary for economic recovery, and education is also the key to upward mobility and better long-term health. Common sense must prevail.

Amy Anderson is an assistant professor in the Schools of Nursing and Medicine at Texas Christian University. Jonathan Butcher is a senior policy analyst in the Center for Education Policy at The Heritage Foundation.

CHINA'S

From Page 8

of any illusion that China intended to honor the one country, two systems mandated by the Basic Law and the 1984 Joint Declaration between China and Great Britain. But without our allies and steadfast support of democratic values by the president of the United States, countries will test U.S. commitment to the expansion of democracy.

As we work now to reopen our own economy, we should recognize expanding the natural political rights of those who happen to reside in China will bolster global commerce and help us drive our own economic destiny. But what is required is both American leadership and an understanding that the secret ingredient to building wealth and lasting peace across the world is a recognition that all people ought to be free to determine their own destiny. So we stand with the people of Hong Kong, and we call on Washington to never lose sight of the north star of freedom.

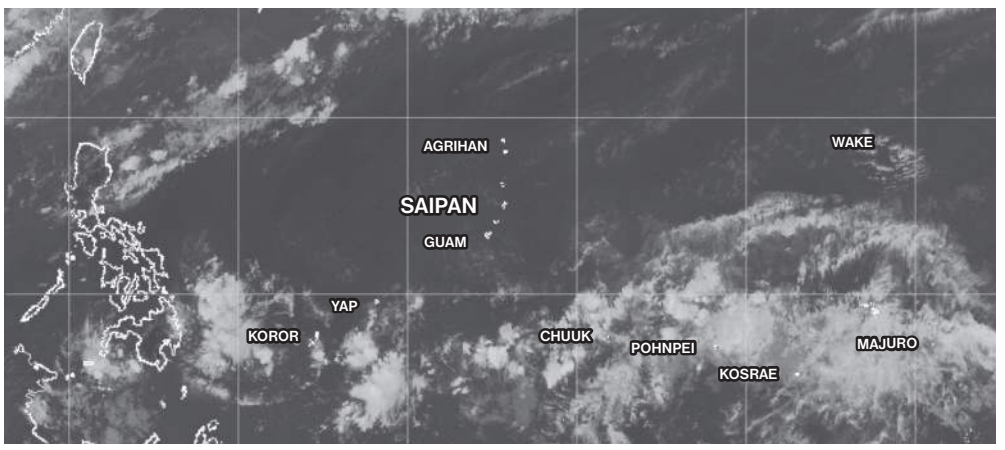
(c) 2020 *The Dallas Morning News*

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Partly cloudy with a slight chance of light showers. East winds 10 mph.	Partly cloudy with a slight chance of showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
90° 78°	89° 78°	89° 79°	89° 79°	89° 79°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 6:09 AM, TUESDAY, MAY 26, 2020

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Scattered clouds, isolated showers and moderate easterly trade winds are present across the region. Buoys and altimetry data showed seas of 4 to 5 feet nearby.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:
- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.net

FLIGHT SCHEDULE

DEPARTURES				ARRIVALS			
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)				**GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN**			
UA117	9:15am	9:55am	1, 4, 6	UA174	7:30am	8:11am	1, 4, 6

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

MICRONESIA	▲ ▼ °F	
Guam and Rota	Partly Cloudy	87° / 79°
Palau	Thunderstorms	85° / 79°
Yap	Thunderstorms	86° / 79°
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	86° / 79°
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	85° / 80°
Kosrae	Cloudy	85° / 80°
Majuro	Thunderstorms	87° / 80°

AROUND THE GLOBE	▲ ▼ °F	
Auckland	Partly Cloudy	61° / 55°
Beijing	Sunny	93° / 64°
Hong Kong	Thunderstorm	86° / 81°
Honolulu	Showers	84° / 73°
London	Partly Cloudy	77° / 54°
Los Angeles	Sunny	73° / 59°
Manila	Thunderstorm	93° / 81°
Melbourne	Partly Cloudy	63° / 45°
Miami	Thunderstorm	84° / 78°
New York	Showers	76° / 65°
Osaka	Mostly Sunny	79° / 61°
Paris	Sunny	81° / 57°
Busan	Mostly Sunny	77° / 64°
Rome	Sunny	82° / 63°
Salem	Thunderstorm	83° / 67°
San Francisco	Sunny	70° / 52°
Seoul	Sunny	75° / 55°
Tokyo	Showers	75° / 61°
Washington, DC	Cloudy	79° / 69°

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	5:46 AM	6:42 PM
Thursday	5:46 AM	6:42 PM
Friday	5:45 AM	6:43 PM
Saturday	5:45 AM	6:43 PM
Sunday	5:45 AM	6:43 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	9:25 AM	10:45 PM	-
Thursday	10:22 AM	11:36 PM	-
Friday	11:21 AM	-	-
Saturday	-	12:24 AM	12:19 PM
Sunday	-	1:09 AM	1:16 PM

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY	FEET	
5:11 AM	LOW TIDE	1.47
9:24 AM	HIGH TIDE	1.85
5:02 PM	LOW TIDE	-0.10
-	-	-

NEWS DESK For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235,3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website:www.saipantribune.com.

CUSTOMER SERVICE For inquiries, purchase of back issues and complaints, call (670) 235-8747, 235-2440, fax 235-3740.

SUBSCRIPTION Published Monday to Friday, *Saipan Tribune* offers door-to-door on-island delivery at an annual rate of $180. For additional subscription information, call (670) 235-8747 or 235-2769, or fax 235-3740.

ADVERTISING For inquiries contact (670) 235-2769.
E-mail: sales@saipantribune.com

COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

GOVERNMENT RESOURCE LISTING PAGE 1 MAY 21, 2020, 11:30 AM

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
- ***Cashier & Customer Service***
  Monday - Friday (Closed on Holidays)
  7:30 AM - 3:00 PM
  Tel: (670) 664-4282
  Pay bills online at www.cucgov.org, via phone by calling toll free Tel: 1-(855)-729-2282, or at any Bank of Guam, Bank of Saipan, or Bank of Hawaii Branch

CNMI State Medicaid Agency
- ***Eligibility Office & Accounting / Claims***
  Monday - Friday
  7:30 AM - 4:30 PM
  Tel: (670) 664-4880/4882
  Still accepting applications and supporting documents via drop-box at Medicaid Office. Medicaid application & renewal / redetermination forms must be original. Applications/forms available for pick up next to the drop-box or online at: www.medicaid.cnmi.mp

Department of Land and Natural Resources
- ***Division of Land Registration***
  Monday - Thursday
  8:00 AM - 12:00 PM
  Tel: (670) 322-9987
- ***Division of Agriculture***
  Monday - Thursday
  8:00 AM - 12:00 PM
  Tel: (670) 256-3320 / 3321
- ***Division of Fish & Wildlife***
  Monday - Thursday
  8:00 AM - 12:00 PM
  Tel: (670) 664-6000

Office of the Attorney General
- ***Civil & Criminal Divisions***
  Monday - Friday
  8:00 AM - 12:00 PM
  Tel: (670) 237-7500 / 7600

Department of Public Works
- ***Administrative Services Division***
  Monday - Thursday
  8:00 AM - 12:00 PM
  Tel: (670) 235-9570 / 5818
- ***Building Safety Code Division***
  Monday - Thursday
  8:00 AM - 12:00 PM
  Tel: (670) 234-2726 / 2296
- ***Technical Services Division***
  Monday - Thursday
  8:00 AM - 12:00 PM
  Tel: (670) 234-9828 / 9838
  - ***Highway Branch***
    Monday - Friday
    7:30 AM - 4:30 PM
- ***Energy Division***
  Monday - Friday
  7:30 AM - 4:30 PM
  Tel: (670) 664-4480 / 4481
- ***Roads and Grounds Division***
  Monday - Friday
  7:30 AM - 4:30 PM
  Tel: (670) 322-9498
- ***Solid Waste Management Division***
  - ***Lower Base Transfer Station & Marpi Landfill***
    Open all week except Wednesday & Sunday
    7:30 AM - 1:00 PM
    Tel: (670) 322-2745 (Lower Base)
    (670) 322-2761 (Marpi Landfill)

CNMI Public Assistance Office
- ***Available via phone or email only:***
  Mondays - Fridays
  7:30 AM - 4:30 PM
  Tel: (670) 664-2411
  Email: info@pa.gov.mp

Office of the Public Defender
- Monday - Friday
  9:00 AM - 3:30 PM
  Tel: (670) 234-6503

SOCIAL DISTANCING TO BE IMPLEMENTED AT ALL OFFICES

GOVERNOR'S COVID-19 TASK FORCE HOTLINE TEL: (670) 287-0046

FOLLOW US @GOVERNORCNMI OR VISIT WWW.GOVERNOR.GOV.MP FOR THE LATEST NEWS & UPDATES

COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

GOVERNMENT RESOURCE LISTING PAGE 2 MAY 21, 2020, 11:30 AM

Department of Finance
- ***Division of Revenue & Taxation***
  Monday - Friday
  8:00 AM - 4:00 PM
  Tel: (670) 664-1000
- ***ALL OTHER DIVISIONS (Except Customs)***
  Monday - Thursday
  8:00 AM - 4:00 PM
- ***Division of Customs Services***
  - ***Airport:*** OPEN DAILY
    8:00 AM - 5:00 PM
  - ***Seaport:*** Monday - Friday
    8:00 AM - 5:00 PM
  - ***Chalan Kanoa Post Office:***
    Monday - Friday 7:30 AM - 4:30 PM
    Saturday 7:30 AM - 11:30 AM

Department of Public Lands
- ***Cashier accepting payments:***
  Monday - Friday, 8:30 AM - 3:30 PM
- ***Available via phone or email:***
  Monday - Friday, 7:30 AM - 4:30 PM
  Tel: (670) 234-3751/52/53/54
  For appointments call (670) 234-3751 or email dpl@dpl.gov.mp

Saipan Zoning Office
- ***Available via phone ONLY:***
  Monday - Thursday
  7:30 AM - 11:30 AM
  Tel: (670) 234-9661/ 9662/ 9663
  Email: geri.delacruz@zoning.gov.mp

CNMI 2020 Census
- Monday – Friday
  7:30 AM – 4:30 PM
  Tel: (670) 682-2020
  Email: cnmi@2020census.gov

Department of Public Safety
- ***Bureau of Motor Vehicle (BMV)***
  - ***Document Drop-Off For Vehicle / Watercraft Registration Renewal***
    Monday - Thursday
    8:00 AM - 11:00 AM
    Tel: (670) 664-9068
  - ***Walk-In For Drivers License***
    Monday - Thursday
    8:00 AM - 11:00 AM
    Tel: (670) 664-9066
- ***Firearms and Records***
  Monday - Thursday
  9:00 AM - 3:00 PM (For Walk-Ins)
  Tel: (670) 664-9072
- ***Highway Safety Office***
  Monday - Thursday (For Walk-Ins)
  9:00 AM - 12:00 PM
  Tel: (670) 664-9121 / 9125 / 9131

Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services
- ***Fire Enforcement Office***
  Monday - Thursday
  7:30 AM - 4:00 PM
  Tel: (670) 664-9178

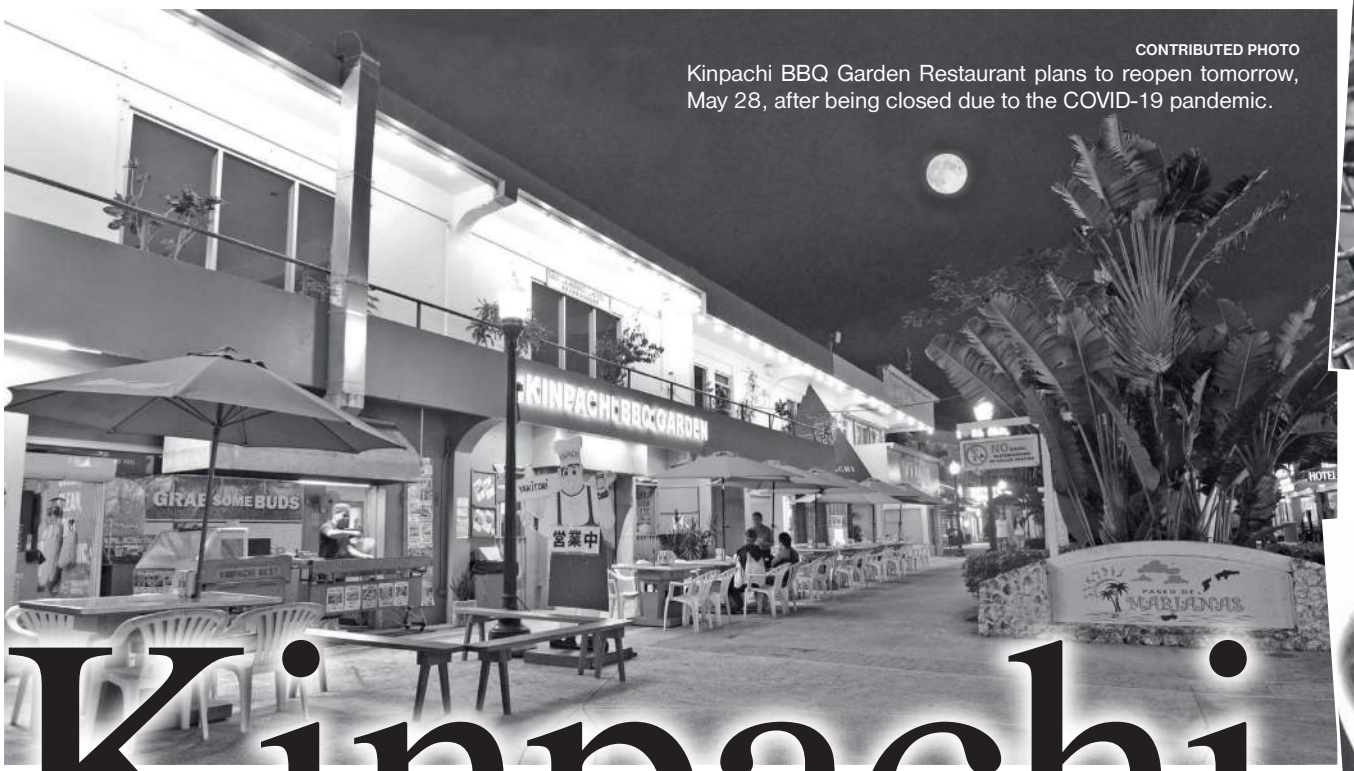
Commonwealth Bureau of Military Affairs
- Monday – Friday
  7:30 AM – 4:30 PM
  Tel: (670) 488-2200 / 0440 / 0550
  Email: glenna.reyes@gov.mp

SOCIAL DISTANCING TO BE IMPLEMENTED AT ALL OFFICES

GOVERNOR'S COVID-19 TASK FORCE HOTLINE TEL: (670) 287-0046

FOLLOW US @GOVERNORCNMI OR VISIT WWW.GOVERNOR.GOV.MP FOR THE LATEST NEWS & UPDATES

Business



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Kinpachi BBQ Garden Restaurant plans to reopen tomorrow, May 28, after being closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Kinpachi BBQ Garden Restaurant's famous $1 barbecue sticks.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Kinpachi BBQ Garden Restaurant's $8 barbecue set menu.

Kinpachi BBQ Garden Restaurant to reopen

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

One of the oldest Japanese restaurants on Saipan will reopen its open-air restaurant this week nearly a month after COVID-19 concerns closed operations.

Kinpachi Restaurant manager Sonia Siwa said they are targeting to reopen the Kinpachi BBQ Garden Restaurant tomorrow, March 28.

"We would like to inform our valued customers that our menu for dine-in and for take-out are mostly our [popular] $1 barbecue chicken and pork in a stick," she said. Also on the menu are katsudon, fried chicken, tonkatsu, and grilled saba fish and squid. Kinpachi BBQ Garden Restaurant's $8 barbecue set menu (choice of grilled porkchop or short ribs with a stick of barbecue) is also available.

For more hearty dishes, Siwa said customers can still order from Kinpachi Restaurant's main menu despite dining at the open-air outlet. Available for order in the regular menu are ramen, udon, soba, curry rice, katsu curry, and chicken katsu curry, to name a few.

Zero sales

Siwa said Kinpachi Restaurant's operation suffered greatly due to coronavirus pandemic as they have had zero sales since closing shop last March 24.

"Our employees were temporarily laid off except our maintenance and they were working on reduced hours," she said.

Siwa added their owner, Misako Kamata, decided to close the business for the protection of both employees and customers. Kamata also took care of her staff during the time they were furloughed.

"Our employees [who were] staying in the company barracks were provided free food—breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Misako-*san* assigned one cook to prepare the meals for our employees," she said.

Kinpachi BBQ Garden Restaurant will be open starting this week for lunch, 11am-2pm, for take-out orders only and for dinner, 5pm-7pm, for dine-in but strictly following social distancing guidelines of seating arrangements 6 feet apart.

Kinpachi Restaurant is located along Coral Tree Avenue in the heart of Paseo de Marianas. For reservations or for more information, call 234-6900 and 233-7715.

1st deadlines for laid-off workers to get health insurance

WASHINGTON (AP)—Many laid-off workers who lost health insurance in the coronavirus shutdown soon face the first deadlines to qualify for fallback coverage under the Affordable Care Act.

Taxpayer-subsidized health insurance is available for a modest cost—sometimes even free—across the country, but industry officials and independent researchers say few people seem to know how to find it. For those who lost their health insurance as layoffs mounted in late March, a 60-day "special enrollment" period for individual coverage under the ACA closes at the end of May in most states.

Altheia Franklin, who lives near Houston, lost her medical plan after being laid off from a job at an upscale retirement community, as a counselor to seniors making the move. Stay-at-home orders and higher virus risks for older people have put such life transitions on hold in the pandemic.

Franklin said she received plenty of government information about coronavirus safety and economic stimulus payments, but "the insurance piece just has not been mentioned."

She scrambled and finally found an ACA—or "Obamacare"—plan she could still afford on a reduced income. "We are in the middle of a pandemic, and God forbid if I get sick and I don't have it," she said of her health insurance.

The nonpartisan Kaiser Family Foundation estimates that nearly 27 million workers and family members had lost job-based health coverage as of the start of this month, a number now likely higher with unemployment claims rising.

In a counter-intuitive finding, Kaiser's study also estimated that nearly 8 in 10 of the newly uninsured would likely qualify for some sort of coverage under former President Barack Obama's health law, either a private plan like Franklin found, or Medicaid.

"The ACA is there as a safety net for the first time in an economic downturn," said Kaiser foundation expert Larry Levitt. But "many people losing their jobs have never had to think of relying on the ACA for coverage, so there is no reason they should be aware of their options."

There are several options, not easy to sort through. Some have application deadlines; others do not. And the Trump administration, which still plans to ask the Supreme Court later this summer to declare "Obamacare" unconstitutional, is doing little to promote the health law's coverage.

US company trials coronavirus vaccine candidate in Australia

CANBERRA, Australia (AP)—A U.S. biotechnology company began injecting a coronavirus vaccine candidate into people in Australia on Tuesday with hopes of releasing a proven vaccine this year.

Novavax will inject 131 volunteers in the first phase of the trial testing the safety of the vaccine and looking for signs of its effectiveness, the company's research chief Dr. Gregory Glenn said.

About a dozen experimental vaccines against the coronavirus are in early stages of testing or poised to start, mostly in China, the U.S. and Europe. It's not clear that any will prove safe and effective. But many work in different ways, and are made with different technologies, increasing the odds that at least one approach might succeed.

"We are in parallel making doses, making vaccine in anticipation that we'll be able to show it's working and be able to start deploying it by the end of this year," Glenn told a virtual news conference in Melbourne from Novavax' headquarters in Maryland.

Animal testing suggested the vaccine is effective in low doses. Novavax could manufacture at least 100 million doses this year and 1.5 billion in 2021, he said.

Manufacture of the vaccine, named NVX-CoV2373, was being scaled up with $388 million invested by Norway-based Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations since March, Glenn said.

The results of the first phase of clinical trials in Melbourne and Brisbane are expected to be known in July, Novavax said. Thousands of candidates in several countries would then become involved in a second phase.

The trial began with six volunteers being injected with the potential vaccine in Melbourne on Tuesday, said Paul Griffin, infectious disease expert with Australian collaborator Nucleus Network.

STOCK PORTFOLIO

LEADING INDICATORS

DOW	S&P	NASDAQ
24,465.16	2,955.45	9,324.59
−8.96	+6.94	+39.71
.037%	0.24%	0.43%

EXCHANGE RATES

In U.S. dollar terms

Australian Dollar	1.5187	Hong Kong Dollar	7.7523	Russian Ruble	70.1709
British Pound	0.8169	Indian Rupee	75.1018	Singapore Dollar	1.4203
Canadian Dollar	1.3925	Japanese Yen	107.8610	South Korean Won	1208.07
Chinese Yuan	7.0201	Malaysian Ringgit	4.3161	Swiss Franc	0.9704
Euro	0.9153	New Zealand Dollar	1.6279	Taiwan Dollar	29.4257
		Philippine Peso	49.5836	Thailand Baht	31.9080

AGAPE Christian School

13th COMMENCEMENT EXERCISES AND VIRTUAL GRADUATION CEREMONY

SCHOOL YEAR 2019-2020

CONTINUE THE SCHOOL'S VISION AND MISSION TO EDUCATE, INSPIRE, & CHANGE LIVES

MAY 27, 2020 • 6:PM

Congratulations

Class of 2020

Middle School Graduates

Xu, Eunice Juan
Valedictorian

Zhang, Qinghong (Beth)
Salutatorian

Chen, Boxin

Chen, Jieni (Jenny)

Dai, Jiale (Caleb)

Hu, Bide (Peter)

Huang, Feiyang (Phillip)

Ji, Enyang (David)

Li, Liming (Antonio)

Liang, Maisen (Alex)

Pang, Aiyuan (Emma)

Qiu, Kailun (Steve)

Shi, Yihong (Grace)

Song, Meiru

Sun, Yijie (Ruth)

Wang, Yuanwei (David)

Wang, Zilan(Sophia)

Wei, Xiaowen (Grace)

Yan, Shenjie (Hannah)

Yang, Shuo

Yang, Weixiu (Alice)

Yu, Hanxiang (Ivy)

Zhang, Haotian (Lance)

Zhao, Shuang (Lynn)

Zheng, Yidan (Tina)

Zhou, Jingyi (Esther)

Zhu, Li (Abraham)

High School Graduates

Du, Shouyu (Joel)
Valedictorian
Next Destination
Major in Computer Science and Computer Engineering
Bob Jones University, South Carolina

He, Jianan (Isaiah)
Salutatorian
Next Destination
Major in Mechanical Engineering
Bob Jones University, South Carolina

Choi, Hyo Joo (Mia)
Next Destination
Northern Marianas College

Fu, Kunbo (Kobe)
Next Destination
Major in Business Management
Pensacola Christian College, Florida

Li, Shunyu (Oliver)
Next Destination
Major in Mechanical Engineering
Pensacola Christian College, Florida

Li, Zhizhen (Emily)
Next Destination
Northern Marianas College / Pensacola Christian College

Li, Zihao (Hansen)
Next Destination
Major in Supply Chain Management
Michigan State University (MSU), Michigan

Lin, Jiayi (Jemima)
Next Destination
Major in Electrical Engineering
Bob Jones University, South Carolina

Wang, Guanqiao (Jason)
Next Destination
Major in Law Enforcement
Bob Jones University, South Carolina

Yang, Song Hao
Next Destination
Major in Business
Northern Marianas College

Zhang, Teng (Tony)
Next Destination
Major in Health Sciences
Bob Jones University, South Carolina

Zheng, Shengbin (Jay)
Next Destination
Major in Electrical Engineering
Pensacola Christian College, Florida

PMB 466, Box 10001, Saipan, MP 96950-8901 • Telephone: (670)2358540/9898488/9898570 • email: acssaipan@gmail.com • website: www.agapesaipan.com

Nation

Pandemic brings smaller, subdued Memorial Day observances

BILLINGS, Mont. (AP)—Americans settled for small processions and online tributes instead of parades Monday as they observed Memorial Day in the shadow of the pandemic, which forced communities to honor the nation's military dead with modest, more subdued ceremonies that also remembered those lost to the coronavirus.

On the weekend that marked the unofficial start of summer, authorities warned people heading to beaches, parks or backyard barbecues to heed social-distancing rules to avoid a resurgence of the disease that has infected 5.4 million people worldwide and killed over 345,000, including nearly 100,000 Americans, according to a tally by Johns Hopkins University.

Memorial Day commemorations were canceled or toned down across the country. Veterans, along with nursing home residents, have made up a significant portion of those who died in the U.S. outbreak.

Frank Groblebe and his wife placed lilacs on several graves at Mountview Cemetery in Billings, Montana, including those of his mother and father, who served in the Philippines as a Navy Seabee during World War II. Groblebe said he approved of plans to curtail the ceremony, which included a motorcycle procession and moments of quiet remembrance.

"This is our freedom. This is our history. It's what they fought for," Groblebe said, briefly choking up with tears. "Anything that shows respect for it is all right with me."

AP

Heidi Hannah holds her head in her hands, as she is joined by her sons Tomas, 10, left, and Lucas, 8, right, at a Memorial Day visit to the grave of her oldest son, Army Specialist Taylor Hannah, at the Sacramento Valley National Cemetery in Dixon, Calif., Monday, May 25, 2020.

Sharon Oakland placed mums on the grave of her father, also a Navy veteran in World War II. She watched from a distance as the motorcycles rolled by. "What they've done is remarkable given what's going on with the virus," she said.

The day looked different across the U.S. The 37,000 American flags traditionally placed on the Boston Common to honor Massachusetts military members who died in service were replaced with just 1,000 flags, to limit volunteers and onlookers. In Minneapolis, several bagpipers and drummers lined up outside the Minnesota Veterans Home and played as a parade of cars drove past.

The city of Woodstock, Georgia, held its ceremony online. American Legion Post 316 Commander Julian Windham recognized service members who helped in the global fight against COVID-19.

"Even when the enemy is an invisible virus or a microscopic germ, the sacrifices made are just as meaningful," Windham said. The ceremony, which included readings, vocal performances and gunshots from a ceremonial rifle team, were filmed over a series of days last week and edited together, Windham said.

In Chicago, a neighborhood group that's been holding a parade for more than a half century also moved its event online, with video clips from previous years and messages from special guests, including veterans and Mayor Lori Lightfoot. In the suburb of Lisle, a convoy of vehicles from fire departments and VFW posts drove silently through village streets.

Fallen military members were honored in New York City with car convoys and small ceremonies.

"It's something we're upset about, but we understand," said Raymond Aalbue, chairman of the United Military Veterans of Kings County, which usually puts on a parade in Brooklyn. There's "no reason to put anybody in harm's way," he said, adding "it's really cutting quick to the heart of all the veterans."

On Long Island, a small group of veterans saluted, wearing masks and spaced several feet apart, as a parade of cars passed beneath a large American flag.

New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo joined a private ceremony at the Intrepid Sea, Air & Space Museum in Manhattan, with both the sacrifices of military members and the challenge of the coronavirus on his mind.

Americans finding ways to stay active while keeping distance

Vicki L. Friedman always wanted to play golf with her adult sons but until this spring couldn't find time to learn the game and practice.

Shaun Warkentin was looking for a diversion when his young sons tired of jumping on the backyard trampoline and being indoors. He discovered the joy of taking them fishing.

Neighborhood and park trails across the country have been getting higher-than-usual use by runners, walkers and bicyclists as people find ways to get fresh air while maintaining social distancing during the coronavirus outbreak.

Golf courses are welcoming more beginners and people returning to the game, states have seen robust sales of fishing licenses since the coronavirus hit full force in the U.S. in March and fitness tracking technology has shown a surge in the number of steps recorded.

Friedman, who lives in Chesapeake, Virginia, took up golf at age 54 after the community college where she works ordered employees to do their jobs from home. That gave her more than an extra hour a day she otherwise would spend commuting.

"When you see what's happening around the world, you prioritize and ask yourself what are some of the things you want to do," she said. "I've always been geared toward work. Right now you want to invest in yourself. What else do I want to do that is fun?"

Friedman goes to the driving range a couple of times a week, hits plastic wiffle golf balls in her backyard and, as a Mother's Day gift from her son, went to a course for the first time and was treated to nine holes. She said on a recent afternoon she was about to play her fourth round in three weeks with the set of used clubs she bought for $30.

"This is a way we can spend time together outside," she said. "It's something new. I like sports, and it's fun. It is more addicting than I would have ever dreamed."

Through last week, rounds posted to the GHIN handicap-tracking app were up 22% this May compared with May 2019, according to the USGA. Posted rounds were up 8% for the year.

CommonGround in Aurora, a Denver-area facility operated by the Colorado Golf Association, reported almost 4,800 rounds played on its 18-hole course in April, compared with just over 3,100 the same month in 2019. The number of rounds played on its nine-hole course for beginners wasn't available, but revenue from green fees was more than double what it was in April 2019, and for the first time reservations were required to ease congestion on the first tee.

National Golf Foundation president and CEO Joe Beditz said he's hearing similar reports from around the country.

"Courses are seeing people they haven't seen before or seen very much of," he said. "They're seeing husbands and wives plays, parents and kids. It's kind of surprising to them because even with some restrictions in states, they are still finding themselves to be busier than a similar time of past years."

Minnesota's fishing permit sales of 354,080 from mid-February to the first week of May were up 45% over a comparable period in 2019 and the highest since 2000. Vermont had issued 21,270 permits through April, up 57%. Missouri for one month waived the requirement that anglers have a permit so residents could have a diversion during the pandemic.

Arbery family lawyer says feds looking into how case handled

ATLANTA (AP)—A lawyer for the family of Ahmaud Arbery said Monday that a federal prosecutor told the slain man's mother federal officials are investigating potential misconduct by local officials who handled the case.

Lawyer Lee Merritt said U.S. Attorney Bobby Christine, whose jurisdiction includes southern Georgia, met with him and Arbery's mother, Wanda Cooper-Jones, on Thursday.

"They wanted us to know they had already been involved in the investigation," Merritt said.

Barry Paschal, a spokesman for Christine, declined to confirm or deny whether the meeting happened.

"Our office does not discuss active investigations, including addressing whether or not those investigations exist," Paschal said.

Arbery was fatally shot Feb. 23 when a white father and son pursued the 25-year-old black man after spotting him running in their subdivision just outside of Brunswick. They told police they believed he was responsible for break-ins in their neighborhood. More than two months passed before Gregory McMichael and his son, Travis McMichael, were arrested on charges of felony murder and aggravated assault.

Brunswick Circuit District Attorney Jackie Johnson has defended her office's involvement. The elder McMichael worked for her as an investigator before retiring a year ago, which required the office to step away from the case.

She handed the case to Waycross Circuit District Attorney George Barnhill. That prosecutor also recused himself, but not before writing a letter saying he believed the McMichaels had been justified in trying to hold Arbery until police arrived and their actions were "perfectly legal."

Asia

Japan lifts coronavirus emergency in all remaining areas

TOKYO (AP)—Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe lifted a coronavirus state of emergency in Tokyo and four other remaining areas on Monday, ending the restrictions nationwide as businesses begin to reopen.

Abe also unveiled a plan for a new stimulus package to support businesses hit by the pandemic.

Experts on a government-commissioned panel approved the lifting of the emergency in Tokyo, neighboring Kanagawa, Chiba and Saitama prefectures, and in Hokkaido to the north, which had more cases and remained under the emergency declaration after it was removed in most of Japan earlier this month.

Under the emergency, people were asked to stay at home and non-essential businesses were requested to close or reduce operations, but there was no enforcement. Since May 14, when the measures were lifted in most of Japan, more people have been leaving their homes and stores have begun reopening.

Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe leaves a venue after a news conference in Tokyo Monday, May 25, 2020. AP

Japan, with about 16,600 confirmed coronavirus cases and about 850 deaths, has so far avoided a large outbreak like those experienced in the U.S. and Europe despite its softer restrictions.

"We were able to bring the outbreak nearly under control in just a month and a half in a uniquely Japanese way" without enforcing measures with penalties, Abe said. "We demonstrated the power of the 'Japan model.'"

But the world's third largest economy has fallen into a recession, and public discontent over Abe's handling of the outbreak has sent his support ratings tumbling. Recent media surveys show public support for his Cabinet has plunged below 30%, the lowest since he returned to office in December 2012.

Abe said the lifting of the emergency does not mean the end of the outbreak. He said the goal is to balance preventive measure and the economy until vaccines and effective drugs become available.

"Our goal is to create a new normal," he said. "We need a new approach to resume our daily social and economic activity."

Abe also announced a new stimulus plan worth about 100 trillion yen ($930 billion) to provide financial support for companies hit by the pandemic. Cabinet approval of a second supplementary budget to fund the additional stimulus is expected later this week.

Combined with an earlier 117 trillion yen stimulus, the amount of spending will be more than 200 trillion yen ($1.9 trillion), he said. The new package will include loan programs to reduce the burden of rent for store owners and subsidies for local governments to step up regional measures.

Abe declared the state of emergency on April 7 in several parts of Japan including Tokyo, expanded it to the entire nation 10 days later, and then extended it until the end of May.

On Monday, Matsuya Ginza department store, a landmark in the posh Tokyo shopping district, resumed operation after being closed for seven weeks. Sales staff wearing plastic face shields welcomed customers with bows but no verbal greetings under new guidelines.

Economy Minister Yasutoshi Nishimura said earlier Monday that recent data suggest that infections have slowed enough and pressure on the medical system has fallen sufficiently to allow a gradual resumption of social and economic activity. He said Tokyo, Kanagawa and Hokkaido, where the number of infections is still fluctuating, will be watched closely.

Individual prefectures are allowed to impose their own measures. Tokyo Gov. Yuriko Koike said last week that the capital will reopen in three phases starting with schools, libraries, museums, and longer service hours for restaurants. She said theaters, sports facilities and other commercial establishments will be next, with nightclubs, karaoke and live music houses in the final phase.

Muslims in India, Bangladesh celebrate Eid subdued by virus

DHAKA, Bangladesh (AP)—Muslims in India and Bangladesh joined prayers to celebrate a subdued Eid-al Fitr on Monday, marking the end of the Ramadan holy month by seeking blessings for a world free from coronavirus.

Across India, government leaders and imams appealed to Eid celebrants to follow lockdown norms and maintain social distance. Bangladesh's leader stressed public safety in her Eid greetings.

The three-day holiday that begins by the sighting of the moon is usually a time of travel, family gatherings and feasts after weeks of dawn-to-dusk fasting. But this year, Muslims were praying at home, their celebrations quieter and tinged with worry about the virus and the impact of lockdowns and other restrictions to curb the spread of the virus.

Outside New Delhi's iconic Mughal-era Jamia mosque, closed as part of a ban on religious congregations, security officers patrolled the streets and almost all shops were closed barring a sweet shop. Police made rounds on motorbikes and a mini police camp stood just outside a gate.

"It's been 1,400 years since the Islam religion was founded, ... even our elders could never imagine that we will have to celebrate Eid in such a way," said businessman Shehzad Khan.

He said money typically spent buying new clothes to wear for Eid was sent to the poor, who have lost livelihoods due to the virus and the measures taken to contain it. "That money we have given them so that they too can celebrate Eid with us," Khan said.

In Bangladesh, authorities asked people to avoid mass prayers in open fields, which draw tens of thousands normally. Devotees could join prayers at mosques by maintaining safe distances.

On Monday morning, those praying in the country's more than 300,000 mosques wore masks, and many wore gloves as well.

S. Korea tracing cases before more students return

BANGKOK (AP)—South Korea has reported 19 new cases of the coronavirus, most from the densely populated Seoul metropolitan area, where officials have been actively tracing transmissions linked to nightclubs and other entertainment venues.

South Korea's Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on Tuesday also reported two more deaths, bringing national totals to 11,225 and 269 fatalities. Officials linked three of the new cases to international arrivals.

South Korea has been reporting around 20 new cases per day over the past two weeks after health workers found hundreds of infections linked to clubgoers who went out in early May as the country eased on social distancing.

The caseload has slowed from early March when it was reporting hundreds of new cases a day, but the new infections in the greater capital area has caused concern as authorities proceed with a phased reopening of schools, which began with high school seniors last week.

Around 2.4 million high school juniors, middle school seniors, first- and second-grade elementary school children and kindergartners will be returning to school on Wednesday.

Health Minister Park Neung-hoo during a virus meeting urged school officials to double-check their preventive measures. He called for authorities to strengthen monitoring on some 390,000 undocumented foreign nationals who may have poor access to medical services and tests, but related measures weren't immediately announced.

South Korea also Tuesday began requiring people to wear masks on public transit and while using taxis. People in South Korea, like in much of Asia, have generally worn masks in public settings and no major disruptions were reported.

Health authorities have left mask enforcement to bus drivers and subway station workers. Taxi drivers are allowed to refuse picking up passengers if they aren't wearing masks.

South Korea since March has banned the exports of masks and channeled most domestically produced masks to pharmacies, where people are currently limited to buying three masks per week. The nationwide rationing was a drastic attempt at calming public anger over shortages, but supply has stabilized.

In other developments in the Asia-Pacific region:

■ **VACCINE TRIAL BEGINS:** U.S. biotechnology company Novavax began injecting a coronavirus vaccine candidate into people in Australia with hopes of releasing a proven vaccine this year. The first phase of the vaccine trial involves 131 volunteers and will test the safety of the vaccine while looking for signs of its effectiveness. About a dozen experimental vaccines are in early stages of testing or poised to start. It's not clear that any will prove safe and effective. Novovax expects the results of the Australian trial to be known in July and it's making more doses in anticipation the vaccine will work.

■ **SEVEN CASES IN CHINA:** China reported seven new virus cases, all tied to Chinese returning from abroad. Just 81 patients remain hospitalized in the country with COVID-19, and another 408 are in isolation and being monitored for being either suspected cases or having tested positive for the virus without showing any symptoms. China has recorded 4,634 deaths from the disease among 82,992 cases. With the decline in numbers, students have gradually returned to class and some international schools in the capital Beijing are preparing to reopen on June 1. China's ceremonial parliament is meeting this week, with social distancing and other anti-virus measures being used.

World

In Bolsonaro's Brazil, everyone else is to blame for virus

RIO DE JANEIRO (AP)—With Brazil emerging as one of the world's most infected countries, President Jair Bolsonaro is deflecting all responsibility for the coronavirus crisis, casting blame on mayors, governors, an outgoing health minister and the media.

By contrast, he portrays himself as a clear-eyed crusader willing to defend an unpopular idea—that shutting down the economy to control COVID-19 will ultimately cause more suffering than allowing the disease to run its course. The refusal of governors to fall into line with his decree allowing gyms to open, he said, verged on authoritarianism.

Confronted with a travel ban imposed on Brazil by the U.S. because of widespread COVID-19, one of his advisers called it press hysteria.

Since the outbreak started, the Brazilian leader has avoided acknowledging the potential effects of his actions, particularly in undermining local leaders' stay-at-home recommendations. A rare exception came in mid-April, as Bolsonaro appointed a new health minister tasked with sparing the economy from the coronavirus.

Brazil's President Jair Bolsonaro, wearing a face mask amid the new coronavirus pandemic, stands amid supporters taking pictures with cell phones as he leaves his official residence of Alvorada palace in Brasilia, Brazil, Monday, May 25, 2020. AP

"Reopening commerce is a risk I run because, if it (the virus) gets worse, then it lands in my lap," he said.

Less than two weeks later, as Brazil's death toll blew past 5,000, he told reporters, "You're not going to put on my lap this count that isn't mine."

Almost a month on, the death toll in the country of 211 million has more than quadrupled, to 23,473, and continues to accelerate.

The Brazilian Supreme Court determined that states and cities have jurisdiction to impose isolation measures. So Bolsonaro on May 7 walked purposefully across the capital's Three Powers Plaza to the top court, a tight cluster of ministers and business leaders in tow, and demanded local restrictions be tempered.

"Some states went too far in their restrictive measures, and the consequences are knocking on our door," he said, adding that tens of millions of Brazilians have lost their income. He has repeatedly singled out some local leaders by name.

When governors defied Bolsonaro's subsequent decree that gyms, barbershops and beauty salons be allowed to operate as essential services, he accused them of undermining the rule of law and suggested the move would invite "undesirable authoritarianism to emerge in Brazil."

On Saturday night, Bolsonaro ventured into the capital of Brasilia to lead by example, this time eating a hot dog bought from a street vendor. Video he posted to Facebook showed supporters snapping selfies and calling him by his nickname—"Myth!"—while those in self-quarantine in overlooking apartments banged pots and pans in protest.

A May 17-18 poll by XP/Ipespe found 58% of those surveyed rated Bolsonaro's pandemic response as bad or terrible, and only 21% as good or excellent. Governors fared more than twice as well in both counts. The poll had a margin of error of 3.2 percentage points.

Latin America's largest nation has confirmed about 375,000 COVID-19 cases, more than any nation except the U.S., and experts say that figure is a significant undercount due to insufficient testing. The strain on Brazil's underfunded hospitals has pushed them to the brink of collapse in multiple states and prevents some patients from getting treatment.

Germany divided over plans to nix rules despite outbreaks

BERLIN (AP)—Germany's federal government and state governors squared up Monday for a battle over plans to end pandemic-related restrictions despite fresh clusters of cases across the country.

The country has seen a steady decline in the overall number of COVID-19 cases thanks to measures imposed 10 weeks ago to limit personal contacts.

But as restrictions have slowly been lifted there have also been case spikes across Germany linked to slaughterhouses, restaurants, religious services, nursing homes and refugee shelters.

The country's current raft of coronavirus measures is due to expire on June 5. Over the weekend, the governor of the state of Thuringia, Bodo Ramelow, said he hopes to lift the blanket rules on social distancing on June 6 and replace them with more targeted measures.

Germany's 16 states are responsible for imposing and lifting restrictions and all currently have physical distancing requirements and an obligation to wear masks on public transit and shops. Thuringia's new approach would raise pressure on other states to ease their rules further.

Government spokesman, Steffen Seibert, told reporters that Chancellor Angela Merkel wants to continue "bravely, and carefully" with easing restrictions, but pushed back against the idea that all measures will be lifted.

"We want to hold onto the fundamental rules for distancing, hygiene and contact restrictions," he said, adding that Merkel favors "binding orders." Seibert cited recent outbreaks following a Baptist service in Frankfurt and at a restaurant in the country's northwest as examples of what can happen if rules aren't followed.

Following Ramelow's announcement, the neighboring state of Saxony said Monday that it, too, is aiming for a "paradigm change" on pandemic rules from June 6 if infections remain low.

At the same time, the interior minister of Bavaria, the state that has seen the most coronavirus infections and borders Thuringia to the south, called Ramelow's plans "irresponsible."

"We will certainly not stand by and watch Ramelow carelessly destroy great successes in the fight against the highly dangerous coronavirus," Interior Minister Joachim Herrmann told the Funke media group.

Merkel is due to hold talks with governors Wednesday.

Federal and state officials agreed earlier this month that restrictions would be re-imposed if there are more than 50 new infections per 100,000 inhabitants in a city or county within a week.

As it stands, Germany's public health agency, the Robert Koch Institute, said Monday that several states reported no new cases overnight, and that the overall total grew by only 289. The seven-day reproduction factor, defined as the mean number of people infected by an infected person, remained under 1 at 0.93, indicating a contraction of new cases.

Health Minister Jens Spahn cautioned, however, against giving the impression that the pandemic is over.

Spahn told tabloid paper Bild that "on the one hand we are seeing whole regions where there are no new reported infections for days. And on the other hand local and regional outbreaks in which the virus is spreading quickly again and immediate intervention is required."

As the pandemic ebbs, officials across Europe are on the lookout for any spike in the number of infections that could indicate a second wave.

There have been several clusters of COVID-19 among slaughterhouse workers in Germany in recent weeks, prompting a government pledge to crack down on conditions in the industry.

Many workers in German abattoirs are migrants from Eastern Europe employed by subcontractors. They often live in shared housing and are transported to and from the slaughterhouses by shuttle bus, increasing the likelihood of infection.

On Monday, Dutch regional health authorities said tests showed 147 of 657 employees at a meat processing plant across the border in the Netherlands were positive for COVID-19.

They said 79 of those infected live in Germany, while 68 are residents of the Netherlands.

In other, non-connected outbreaks in Europe, a mine in the Czech Republic stopped work after tests of about 2,400 people revealed 212 with the coronavirus, mostly miners and their family members.

And across the continent in Portugal, health officials said tests of 346 people at the warehouse near Lisbon returned 121 positive cases.

Israel's Netanyahu vows to push ahead with annexing West Bank

JERUSALEM (AP)—Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Monday pledged to annex parts of the occupied West Bank in the coming months, vowing to move ahead with the explosive plan despite a growing chorus of condemnations by key allies.

The Palestinians, with wide international backing, seek the entire West Bank as the heartland of a future independent state. Annexing large chunks of this territory would all but destroy the faint remaining hopes of a two-state solution.

In an apparent reference to the friendly administration of President Donald Trump, Netanyahu said Israel had a "historic opportunity" to redraw the Mideast map that could not be missed. Israeli media quoted him as saying he would act in July.

"This is an opportunity that we will not let pass," he told members of his conservative Likud party. He added that the "historic opportunity" to annex the West Bank had never before occurred since Israel's founding in 1948.

The comments threatened to push Israel closer to a confrontation with Arab and European partners, and could deepen what is becoming a growing partisan divide over Israel in Washington.

Israel captured the West Bank in the 1967 Mideast war. It has settled nearly 500,000 Jewish settlers in the territory, but never formally claimed it as an Israeli territory due to stiff international opposition.

But the Trump administration has taken a much softer line toward Israeli settlements than its predecessors. Trump's Mideast team is dominated by advisers with close ties to the settlements, and his Mideast plan, unveiled in January, envisions leaving some 30% of the territory under permanent Israeli control while giving the Palestinians expanded autonomy in the rest of the area. The Palestinians have rejected the plan, saying it is unfairly biased toward Israel.

With Trump's re-election prospects uncertain this November, Israeli hard-liners have urged Netanyahu to move ahead with annexation quickly. The Israeli leader's new coalition deal includes an official clause allowing him to present his annexation plan to the government in July.

Netanyahu told party members in a closed-door meeting that "we have a target date for July and we don't intend to change it," Likud officials said.

"For everything there is a season, and a time for every purpose under heaven." - Ecclesiastes 3:1

†JOSE REBUENOG LIFOIFOI

OCTOBER 26, 1936 – MAY 18, 2020

With wings spread wide upon entering the gate of God's Paradise. Joe is greeted and welcomed by his ever-endearing **wife †Amalia Taisacan Lifoifoi; his children †Josephine and †Joseph; parents †Alfonso Camacho and †Adela Selepeo Lifoifoi; parents-in-law †Ngo See and Elena Panaguiton Ho; his brothers and sisters and in-laws †Donata; †Guillermo; †Maria; †Bertha and Ines; †Jimmy Marquez; †Esteven Nogis; †Benjamin Gonzales, Sr.**

As he begins his new life in Paradise, **Joe's** legacy, etched in the hearts of his wife Cecilia, his children and their families, **Joseph** (Risha); **Remedio**; **Ignacia** (Manny); **Angel; Alfred John; Paterno** (Elizabeth); his son-in-law Sebastian; his brothers/sisters, in-laws and their families, **Rosalia L. Marquez; Victor** (Julie); **Fermin** (Rosita); Herman Taitano; Felicidad Lifoifoi; Fred Napo; James Phillips; Rosa/Saturnino Milanes; Jose Herbert/Josephine Ho; Jocelyn Ho; Zenaida H. Gonzalez, Corazon and Vic Rodriguez, William & Elizabeth Ho, David Ho shall remain forever. His pleasant personality, jokes, laughters, and sound advices will no longer be heard; his voice is silent, but these memories will forever be treasured and kept close to their hearts.

Joe was a prosperous man, always ready and willing to extend a helping hand to those in need, but most of all, was a loving and supportive father to his children, grandchildren, greatgrandchildren and wives, and, was so loved by his numerous aunts, uncles, cousins, nephews, nieces, godchildren; and the abundance of acquaintances he crossed path with. He was a successful businessman in his own ways, and had the interest of the community especially his village of Tanapag at heart; was very active in the welfare of his home island, Saipan, having served as a public servant in the 3rd, 4th and 5th Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature and rose to the Speakership in the 5th Legislature; Chairman of the Commonwealth Ports Authority for many years until his retirement in 2019; Chairman of the United Micronesia Development Association (UMDA); was vested the title of Honorary Consul of the Republic of Palau; and was very active and a political figure in our beautiful Commonwealth.

Joe will be with us for the last time on Saturday, May 30, at Santa Remedios Church, Tanapag beginning at 7:30 AM for responso service, rosary and public visitation. Mass of Christian burial will be celebrated at 11:00 AM followed with the Rite of Committal at Tanapag Cemetery, where our dearly beloved will be laid to peaceful rest.

The service will be live streamed on Facebook. Please visit www.facebook.com/IIM.CNMI or Island Image & Motion CNMI's Facebook page for the live-stream. Livestream will start at 11:00.

For viewing, visitation and Celebration of the Eucharist please observe social distancing and wear facial mask. The cooperation and understanding of everyone is greatly appreciated.

Olomwaay, Si Yu'us Ma'ase, & Thank You

CECILIA HO LIFOIFOI, CHILDREN & FAMILY

Good Housekeeping

By Grace Dickinson
THE PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER

(DREAMSTIME/TNS)
Now is a good time (it is always a good time) to eat more plants. And they're perfect for the grill.

Eat more plants: Veggie dishes for the grill

It's never a bad time to start eating more plants. And that includes now.

Whether you're nervous about the meat shortage or just want to get back on track after a bout of pandemic-spawned stress eating, fruit and veggies are your friend, always. They'll give you energy and make you feel better.

And they're perfect for the grill. We've got a few plant-based recipes that make it easy to incorporate more vegetables into your diet. They are designed to be entrees rather than side dishes, letting veggies become the star of your next cookout.

We chatted with executive chef Andrew Henshaw of Laser Wolf, the newest restaurant from James Beard Award winners Mike Solomonov and Steve Cook, where a charcoal grill is responsible for cooking up more than 75% of the menu.

Amidst the pandemic, Henshaw remains firing up dishes like grilled asparagus with spring peas and whole grilled baby eggplant for Laser Wolf's rotating Saturday to-go menu.

He shares his best general advice for cooking grilled veggies to perfection—plus a simple idea for dessert.

HOW TO GRILL VEGGIES BETTER

For starters, treat veggies as if you were grilling a piece of meat, says Henshaw.

"I'm not a vegetarian or anything, but the more that we think about vegetables as entrees, the better we'll all be—they're better for your health, the environment, your wallet," he says. "When you stop treating them as just an afterthought, they become incredibly delicious."

Zucchini, corn, onions, tomatoes, and mushrooms top Henshaw's list of favorite ingredients to grill. For all of them, seasoning is crucial. Just as you wouldn't throw a chicken breast on the grate without a proper marinade, a zucchini needs more attention than a quick drizzle of oil. Ideally, you'd start the seasoning process the night before.

"Four to six hours is the minimum for marinating—you really want the marinade to penetrate the vegetable," says Henshaw. "If you just rub it on the outside right before, it'll fall off and can create flare-ups, so then the food will not only be flavorless but it'll get singed."

For vegetables with a higher moisture content, like eggplant, mushrooms, and zucchini, apply salt first to eliminate excess water. Sprinkle Kosher salt on top of cut veggies, and let them hang out in a strainer for a few hours before marinating. (For eggplant, salting overnight is ideal.) This will enhance the sear or caramelization process when they finally hit the grill.

Henshaw's go-to marinade recipe is simple, and encourages you to play the classic pandemic substitution game where you utilize the ingredients you have on hand. In a blender, process one onion (roughly chopped), a few cloves of garlic, and either a half of a bunch of herbs (cilantro/chives/parsley) or a tablespoon of your favorite spice (like cumin or coriander). You can also use a combination of herbs and spices. Add salt, to taste, and as it's blending, slowly start to stream in one cup of vegetable oil. It's a recipe that'll work well for most veggies, says Henshaw.

"Play around with whatever you have lying around in your fridge—but don't forget the lemon," says Henshaw. "After you're done marinating and you move to the cooking, you'll want to add a squeeze of lemon just before everything comes off the grill."

To gear up your grill station, Henshaw recommends getting a long pair of tongs, metal skewers, and a grill basket.

"It's easy for vegetables to fall through the grates when flipping, so a vegetable basket will make your life a lot easier," says Henshaw. "You can just shake it and toss everything at once."

Don't be afraid to get creative. One of Henshaw's secret weapons is flash-grilled cilantro stems (30 seconds, grilled as is), which he mixes into soups, stocks, and salsas. And for dessert, grilled fruit is as easy as it gets.

"Pineapple is awesome—just cut it into one-inch thick slices, and grill five minutes per side on medium to low heat," says Henshaw.

Eat it straight off the grill or serve it with vanilla ice cream. Henshaw also recommends skewered strawberries and peaches, a perfect topper for angel food cake. Brush the fruit with honey, and grill the skewers for one to two minutes on each side over high heat.

CHEAT SHEET: GRILLING VEGGIES

Treat vegetables with the same care you treat meat. Seasoning is crucial. If you prepare them properly, they can make a satisfying main.

Salt veggies with higher moisture content to eliminate excess water. Sprinkle salt over cut veggies and let sit in a strainer. Drain well before proceeding.

Allow time for marinating. Four to six hours is a good start, but overnight is ideal to let the flavors penetrate the vegetables.

Hit veggies with a squeeze of lemon just before they come off the grill.

A veggie basket will make your life easier. This simple tool lets you toss and flip without fear of anything slipping through the grate.

Think outside the box. From cilantro stems to strawberries, there's plenty that the grill can make delicious.

RECIPES

Shiitake Mushroom Skewers

(Serves 4)

These hearty skewers were among the first entrees on Laser Wolf's opening menu. If time allows, let the mushrooms marinate overnight, and serve them with a side of glazed onions (recipe below). "Salty, savory mushrooms with sweet and sour onion hits all the flavor centers," says Henshaw.

Ingredients

2 pounds shiitake mushrooms2 tablespoons plus two teaspoons kosher salt, divided1 yellow onion, diced4 cloves garlic1/2 bunch parsley, roughly chopped (or whatever herb you have in the house; can also swap for 2 tablespoons of dried parsley)1 teaspoon black pepper1 teaspoon white pepper (if not available, double up on black pepper)1 teaspoon coriander1 teaspoon kosher salt1 cup vegetable oilDirections

Remove stems from the mushrooms, and toss the caps with 2 tablespoons of salt. Place in a strainer and allow some of their liquid to drain while you prepare the marinade.

Peel garlic and smash with the broad side of a knife. Add onion, garlic, herbs, pepper, coriander, and 1 teaspoon salt to a food processor or blender. Begin pureeing on low speed. Once everything is liquefied, turn to high speed and slowly stream in the oil.

Transfer to a container. Marinade may be covered and stored in the refrigerator for up to one week.

Starting with about ½ cup, toss the mushrooms in the marinade, adding more if needed until mushrooms are evenly coated. Let marinate overnight or for at least six hours.

Thread mushrooms onto skewers and grill over medium-high heat for about four minutes per side. When mushrooms are softened all the way through and charred on the outside, remove from the grill. Serve immediately, aside glazed onions (see below).

Recipe courtesy Andrew Henshaw, executive chef of Laser Wolf

Glazed Onions

Ingredients

8 ounces pearl onions½ cup red wine vinegar1 tablespoon vegetable oil1 teaspoon salt¼ cup pomegranate molasses (if needed, substitute honey, any fruit molasses, or even a 1:1 water-to-sugar simple syrup) Directions

Preheat oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit. Toss the onions in the vinegar, salt, and vegetable oil. Place in an 8-x-8-inch dish.

Bake for 20 minutes. Onions can be cooled and stored in the refrigerator for up to five days, covered tightly. When ready to grill, toss them with the molasses and grill (preferably in a grill basket, or carefully directly on grates) for four to five minutes, tossing to cook evenly all around.

Recipe courtesy Andrew Henshaw, executive chef of Laser Wolf

Life & Style

Brian May reveals recent heart attack, says he's good now

LONDON (AP)—Queen guitarist Brian May says he recently had three stents put in after experiencing "a small heart attack."

May said Monday in an Instagram video that the stents were put in after his doctor drove him to a hospital after he starting feeling the symptoms of a heart attack. He said he found the experience shocking, because "I thought I was a very healthy guy."

The 72-year-old said he feels fine now and the procedure was a success. "I walked out with a heart that's very strong now," May said.

He thanked his doctors and caregivers. May asked fans to send him congratulations, not sympathy messages.

"I'm incredibly grateful that I now have a life to lead again," he said.

His video post details a lengthy health saga this month that included dealing with a compressed nerve that was causing him extreme pain.

The month started with May and Roger Taylor—the remaining members of Queen—teaming up with singer Adam Lambert to release a new version of the band's "We Are the Champions" to raise money for front line healthcare workers battling COVID-19.

Proceeds from the song benefit the World Health Organization's COVID-19 Solidarity Response Fund.

In this Jan. 16, 2020 file photo, Brian May, of Queen, attends a press conference ahead of the Rhapsody Tour at a hotel in Seoul. May said he recently had three stents put in after experiencing "a small heart attack." AP

Omar describes life as a fearless fighter in new memoir

By AMY FORLITI
ASSOCIATED PRESS

MINNEAPOLIS (AP)—Democratic Rep. Ilhan Omar's metamorphosis from refugee to the first Somali-American in Congress has been well-documented. Now, Omar is out with a new memoir that offers her own spin on her path to prominence, starting with her childhood in Mogadishu. "This is What America Looks Like: My Journey from Refugee to Congresswoman," set for release Tuesday, offers no revelations on some of the controversies that have dogged Omar. Instead, it sketches rugged years that Omar says made her a fearless fighter, unafraid to skirmish with President Donald Trump and her frequent conservative critics.

A YOUNG FIGHTER

In her memoir, written with Rebecca Paley, Omar recounts taking on a much taller boy when she was just 7, rubbing his face in the sand after he picked on someone weaker.

"I wasn't afraid of fighting. I felt like I was bigger and stronger than everyone else—even if I knew that wasn't really the case," she wrote. It's a theme woven throughout the book, including after she arrived in America and settled in Arlington, Virginia, knowing almost no English.

Omar got into fights in middle school to show she wasn't afraid, she writes, and she describes incidents in which she choked one boy until he foamed at the mouth and kept hitting another girl even after being told the girl was pregnant.

"Fighting didn't feel like a choice. It was a part of me. Respect goes both ways," she wrote.

LIFE IN SOMALIA

Omar said she grew up the youngest of seven in a loud, opinionated middle-class family, living in a guarded compound in Mogadishu. Her father's clan was one of the country's most powerful, and her mother, who died when she was in preschool, was Benadiri, a Somali ethnic minority. Omar, who described herself as a tomboy, said the only place she fit in was within the walls of her family home. Civil war broke out when she was 8, and after her family's compound came under attack by militia, the family escaped and eventually made it to a refugee camp in Kenya, where Omar spent four years before the family moved to the U.S.

LOVE AND STRUGGLES

Omar recounts meeting her first husband, Ahmed Hirsi, in Minneapolis when she was 16. She said they were in love, and shortly before she turned 19, their families decided they should marry.

By 2008, Omar was struggling. Finances were a stressor, she had two small children, and she began questioning her relationships, including her marriage. Since the couple had married religiously—not civilly—to get divorced, Hirsi had to simply declare the marriage ended, Omar wrote.

She then had what she called "a Britney Spears-style meltdown" in which she shaved her head and eloped with a man, Ahmed Nur Said Elmi, whom she wrote she "spent so little time with that I wouldn't even make him a footnote in my story if it weren't for the fact that this event turned into the main headline later on."

In the book, Omar doesn't name Elmi or say how they met or when their relationship ended. She later reunited with Hirsi and had a third child. Her book also doesn't mention her recent divorce from Hirsi and new marriage to a man who works as a consultant for her.

"SPECULATION AND CONSPIRACIES"

Since Omar ran for state lawmaker in 2016, she has been met with allegations that Elmi, the man she married during her split from Hirsi, is her brother. Omar again denies those claims, saying they originated from a post in an online Somali discussion forum that she said was a last-ditch effort to sink her campaign.

"That Somalis were some of my harshest critics might seem absurd. But they refused to accept me because I refused to kiss the ring. It goes back to my inability since childhood to submit to bullies," she wrote.

PUBLIC LIFE

Omar was elected to the state Legislature in 2016, knocking off a 44-year incumbent. She describes a statehouse "hostile to my presence" because of her determination to attack the status quo, and recounts confronting a fellow Democratic lawmaker unhappy she'd won a leadership position.

The lawmaker told Omar she was different, and eventually said it was because she walks into a room "like a man."

"A white man," Omar said she responded.

As a congresswoman, Omar has come under fire for controversial statements, and has been the subject of attacks and falsehoods by critics. She said in her book that she defends her policies, and her identity is not up for debate.

"I am, by nature, a starter of fires," she wrote.

In this Feb. 29, 2020 file photo, U.S. Rep. Ilhan Omar, D-Minn., speaks at a rally in Springfield, Mass. AP

Man's serious health issues dominate 40-year marriage

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
FROM UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

DEAR ABBY: I married my husband 40 years ago. A few years later, he was diagnosed with diabetes. He refused to take care of himself and ended up with double leg amputations 13 years ago. He had prosthetics but wouldn't use them. I stood by him and was his advocate, but he blamed me!

He has major health issues now, but I'm not too concerned. According to him, it's "none of my business." Family doesn't care because he doesn't care. My daughter blames me, but she doesn't bother to have much contact with her father.

I have had enough of trying to help a man who doesn't want help. This is a loveless marriage and has been for years. He's also addicted to computer porn. He stays at a computer for hours, even when people are around. He doesn't care who's around. He broke his computer recently, and I have refused to allow him on mine, so he is angry at me for that too.

For most of our marriage I have worked outside the home. I still do. I would rather be out of the house than here with a husband who doesn't care if I'm around or not. Please advise me what I can do.

REACHED THE LIMIT

DEAR REACHED: What you can do depends upon what you WANT to do. There must be a reason why you have remained in this loveless marriage as long as you have. Since you asked, I do have a word of advice. Help your husband to get another computer. If you do, it may lessen some of the hostility that is ruling your household. He will be occupied, and you can do whatever you need to do to keep yourself sane.

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: My husband and I are dealing with a terminal health condition, and many folks have offered to help, particularly in the area of providing meals, which we really appreciate. Recently, a family from our church brought us over a meal that included a nice entree, dessert, bread and breakfast pastries, all homemade. We enjoyed the entree, but quickly lost our appetites after opening the dessert to find a hair of unknown origin in it. We were, unfortunately, unable to enjoy the rest of the food because of this.

My dilemma is how to handle this with the family. I'm sure we will see them at church, and they have already reached out asking when they can bring us another meal. I don't want to embarrass anyone, but neither do I think I can consume another one from them.

For what it's worth, we have someone who comes in weekly who prepares meals for us (whom we pay). This has been a huge help because it alleviates the time and effort required to shop, cook and clean up for most of the work week because I work full time as well as care for my husband. How can I tactfully decline this family's kind offers without coming right out and saying why we don't want their food?

GROSSED OUT IN THE WEST

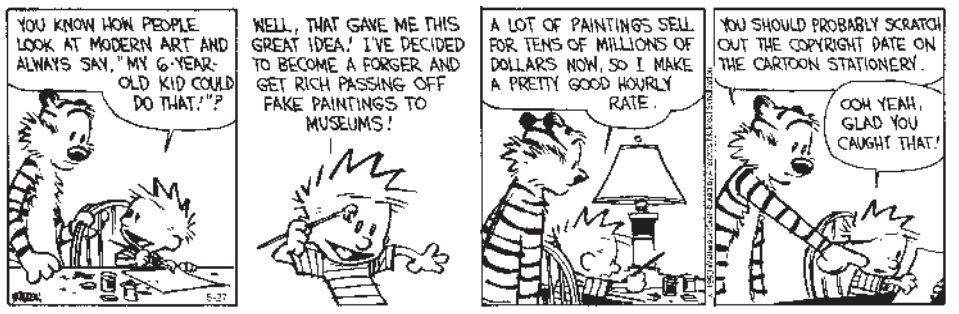
DEAR GROSSED OUT: It should not embarrass those nice people if you thank them for offering to send you more food, and tell them you no longer need food because you have hired someone who comes in and cooks for you. It's short, sweet and it's the truth.

For everything you need to know about wedding planning, order "How to Have a Lovely Wedding." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Wedding Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.

Pastimes

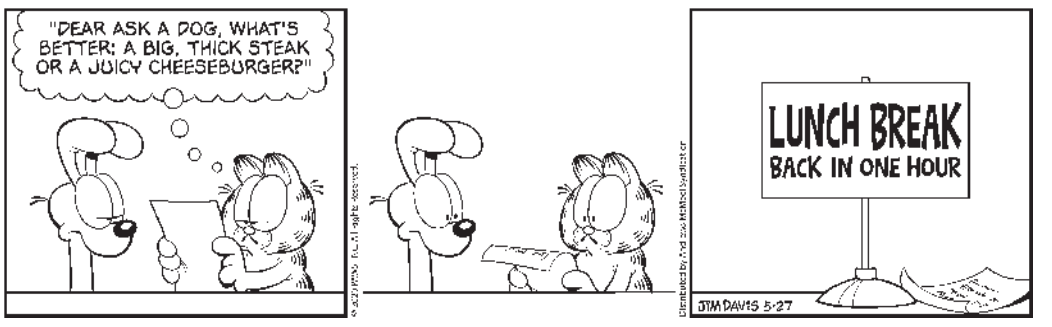
Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


YOU KNOW HOW PEOPLE LOOK AT MODERN ART AND ALWAYS SAY, "MY 6-YEAR-OLD KID COULD DO THAT!"?
WELL, THAT GAVE ME THIS GREAT IDEA! I'VE DECIDED TO BECOME A FORGER AND GET RICH PASSING OFF FAKE PAINTINGS TO MUSEUMS!
A LOT OF PAINTINGS SELL FOR TENS OF MILLIONS OF DOLLARS NOW, SO I MAKE A PRETTY GOOD HOURLY RATE.
YOU SHOULD PROBABLY SCRATCH OUT THE COPYRIGHT DATE ON THE CARTOON STATIONERY.
OOH YEAH, GLAD YOU CAUGHT THAT!

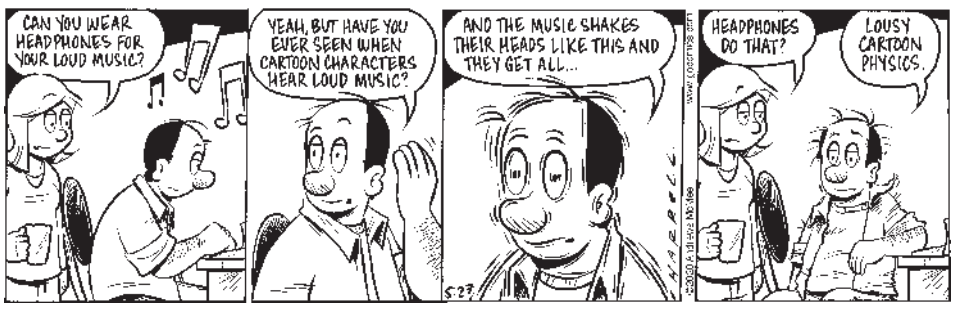
Garfield®

By Jim Davis



Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


CAN YOU WEAR HEADPHONES FOR YOUR LOUD MUSIC?
YEAH, BUT HAVE YOU EVER SEEN WHEN CARTOON CHARACTERS HEAR LOUD MUSIC?
AND THE MUSIC SHAKES THEIR HEADS LIKE THIS AND THEY GET ALL...
HEADPHONES DO THAT?
LOUSY CARTOON PHYSICS.

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

I SAY THE VIRUS IS A CONSPIRACY BY THE ILLUMINATI!
THAT'S THE MOST RIDICULOUS THING I'VE EVER HEARD!
OH, YEAH? WAIT TILL I TELL YOU HOW RIVERDANCE IS INVOLVED!

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Physique
4 Jazz singer James
8 Hip
12 Language suffix
13 Walked (on)
14 Swiss river
15 100%
16 Like some car cell phones
18 Eucalyptus eater
20 Command to Rover
21 Seth's son
24 Talked wildly
28 "Look this way!"
32 Sleuth Wolfe
33 Allow
34 Rental contract
36 Crater part
37 Teensy bit
39 Cold War competition
41 Dressed to the —
43 Computer pro
44 Insult, slangily
46 Cowboy's greeting
50 Returns to one's residence
55 Stephen of "Still Crazy"
56 Ellipse
57 Caesar's "vidi"
58 Sort
59 Lighten
60 Crazy
61 Poetic contraction

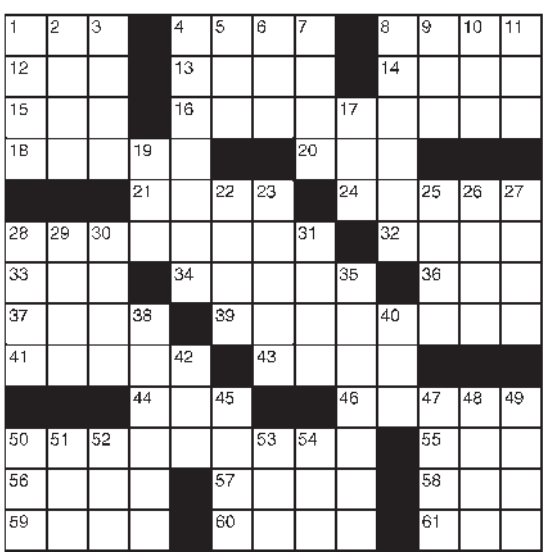
DOWN

1 Toucan feature
2 Capital on a fjord
3 Crème — crème
4 Hand sanitizer ingredient
5 La-la lead-in
6 Great weight
7 Tosses in
8 Long tunic
9 Scull need
10 Raw rock
11 Writer Harper
17 Army address
19 Guitar master Paul
22 Draft status
23 Brainy
25 Aloe —
26 Guitarist Clapton
27 Rotunda top
28 Flair
29 Bigfoot's cousin
30 Thames town
31 Salinger girl
35 Shuns
38 Butt in
40 Pi follower
42 Bro's kin
45 Tibia's place
47 Legal document
48 Sub shop
49 Talks nonstop
50 Weeding tool
51 Actress Mendes
52 Small batteries
53 Buckeyes sch.
54 Yoga pad

Solution time: 23 mins.

M	E	N	D	■	H	A	R	M	■	O	P	T
A	I	F	F	■	F	T	T	U	■	I	F	A
O	I	D	F	I	A	M	F	S	■	D	F	B
■	■	■	F	F	I	S	■	I	I	S	P	S
P	R	O	N	G	■	■	C	I	N	C	■	■
A	U	L	D	■	L	A	J	N	G	I	E	D
B	E	D	■	B	A	B	E	S	■	O	L	E
A	R	M	O	I	R	E	S	■	M	O	A	N
■	■	A	D	O	S	■	■	G	J	L	L	Y
A	N	S	F	I	■	D	O	O	R	■	■	■
R	O	T	■	O	I	D	T	I	M	F	R	S
A	V	F	■	G	O	A	T	■	J	R	D	U
B	A	R	■	Y	O	Y	O	■	R	F	A	M

Yesterday's answer 5-27



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Chris Colfer, 30; Shanola Hampton, 43; Jack McBrayer, 47; Paul Bettany, 49.

Happy Birthday: Open up about the way you feel and what your intentions are. Explore the possibilities and different lifestyles that suit your personality as well as your dreams, hopes and wishes. Be honest with yourself about what's doable. Don't spread yourself too thin when you should be focusing on what's most important to you. Your numbers are 6, 14, 20, 27, 33, 39, 46.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* Use what you've learned to help you get through a challenge. Draw on experience, knowledge and whatever resources you have to ensure that you make the best decision possible. It's time to firm up on a commitment. ✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* Be prepared if you want a change you implement to work. Iron out subtle but essential details before you leap forward. An opportunity is beneficial only if you are in a position to make it work for you. Uncertainty is a red flag. ✪✪✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* Beware of false information or advice. Double-check facts and sources before you make decisions that can affect your position, reputation or well-being. Pour your heart into honing your skills and keeping up with technology. ✪✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* An adjustment will determine how well a project turns out. Follow your instincts, and you will find a solution that allows you to bypass dealing with institutions or authority figures. Play by the rules, and fix what isn't working for you. ✪✪✪

LEO *(July 23-August 22):* Before you make a move, discuss your intentions with someone aware of your circumstances and a reliable source for honest and helpful input. Don't be tempted by a flashy offer when a minor adjustment is all that's required. ✪✪✪

VIRGO *(August 23-September 22):* Take a back seat, and be an observer for the time being. Someone will use persuasive tactics to try to push you in a direction that isn't in your best interest. Make a change if it benefits you. ✪✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* An open mind will take you on a journey that will lead to a brighter future. What you learn today will point you in a new direction. Online correspondence classes and finding information that will improve your health are favored. ✪✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* Listen to complaints, and rectify the problem promptly. Make an effort to enhance your living conditions as well as your relationships with those close to you. Take the edge off by striving to keep the peace. ✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* A calculated risk will pay off. Follow your intuition, not what someone tells you. A personal relationship should be reevaluated and your intentions revealed. Honesty and integrity matter, and judgments will be made. It's time to commit or move on. ✪✪✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

COPYRIGHT 2007 UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* Keep your thoughts to yourself and your eye on what's happening around you. If you act in haste or jump to conclusions, you will send the wrong message. Don't make an emotional change; make a smart move in order to avoid trouble. ✪✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* Do your best to understand what others are trying to tell you. Speak from the heart and offer realistic suggestions, and you will turn a difficulty around. A positive attitude will lead to personal gain. Self-improvement projects are favored. ✪✪✪

PISCES *(February 19-March 20):* Listen, watch and assess what's happening around you. Don't make promises or get involved in something foreign to you. Believing someone without checking references or facts will end up being costly. Protect your heart, possessions and passwords. ✪✪✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are adventuresome, imaginative and unpredictable. You are playful and helpful.

Visit Eugenialast.com, or join Eugenia on Twitter/Facebook/LinkedIn.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

			3					
			4	9	7		5	3
9		3				2		1
7		4				1		5
3	5						2	6
	6						7	
		2				8		
		7	6		9	5		
			1	8	5			

Difficulty Level ★★★ 5/27

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer

1	8	5	3	9	2	4	6	7
7	6	9	8	5	4	3	1	2
4	3	2	7	1	6	5	9	8
9	7	6	2	4	1	8	5	3
3	5	4	9	7	8	6	2	1
8	2	1	6	3	5	7	4	9
2	1	7	5	6	3	9	8	4
5	9	8	4	2	7	1	3	6
6	4	3	1	8	9	2	7	5

Difficulty Level ★★

©2012 Conceptis Puzzles, Dist. by King Features Syndicate, Inc.

WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

TOILET PAPER — Solution: 9 letters

E	B	S	Ⓣ	T	C	A	P	R	I	C	E	A	E	S
N	N	Ⓕ	E	O	I	L	A	Y	E	R	S	B	L	S
H	Ⓞ	E	P	R	U	S	E	S	T	F	R	L	L	R
Ⓢ	Y	U	I	I	O	C	S	A	L	A	O	A	E	D
E	T	T	V	G	L	T	H	U	N	R	E	T	R	N
R	H	H	T	E	Y	E	S	D	E	D	A	R	U	A
F	I	N	E	E	L	H	S	L	E	W	N	A	T	L
M	C	I	S	P	Y	L	B	N	R	R	G	I	A	K
O	K	M	C	I	T	A	E	S	G	O	E	D	N	R
O	L	R	O	W	L	T	G	D	U	O	L	C	V	I
R	E	A	O	C	S	E	S	T	U	L	T	R	A	K
T	E	H	Y	I	N	U	T	N	E	C	S	A	L	C
S	N	C	O	T	T	O	N	E	L	L	E	F	U	A
E	E	M	L	O	C	O	R	O	N	E	T	T	E	P
R	X	E	L	S	I	G	N	A	T	U	R	E	M	S

© 2020 Andrews McMeel Syndication www.wonderword.com 5/27

Angel, Brands, Caprice, Charmin, Clean, Cloud, Coronet, Cottonelle, Deals, Flush, Fresh, Gayetty, Gentle, Green, Hygiene, Kirkland, Kleenex, Layers, Lotus, Moistened, Naturelle, Nouvelle, Pack, Piles, Recyclable, Restroom, Rolls, Scent, Scott, Seat, Signature, Soft, Stores, Tesco, Thick, Tissue, Touch, Traidcraft, Ultra, Uses, Value, Water, Wipe

Yesterday's Answer: Malevolence

Treasuries 14, 15, 17, 18 and 21 through 39 can be purchased online at www.WonderWordBooks.com.

Top 16 seeding could pit Nets vs Lakers

NEW YORK—If the NBA is able to continue the 2019-20 season like reports are indicating, and if the league sticks with its normal playoff format, the Brooklyn Nets are slated to be the No. 7 team in the Eastern Conference. Should the league try to play a few more games before starting the 2020 NBA Playoffs, that could change since the Orlando Magic are one game back in the loss column.

But now is the chance for the NBA to stray from the norm, in a year that's been anything but normal for anyone. The league's hiatus has provided NBA commissioner Adam Silver with the opportunity to propose a playoff format where all 16 teams that qualify for the postseason are re-seeded 1-16 regardless of conference.

ESPN's Brian Windhorst expressed on "Get Up!" that it could be proposed to owners on Friday. But even if it does, he still doesn't think it'll stick long term.

Regardless of what happens beyond 2019-20, if a 1-16 reseeding proposal does go through for this year's playoffs, then the Nets wouldn't face the Toronto Raptors like they're slated to now. In fact, they wouldn't face an Eastern Conference team in the first round.

In a 1-16 re-seeded format, the Nets would be the No. 15 team, and they'd face the top-seeded team in the Western Conference: the Los Angeles Lakers, who'd be No. 2 behind the Milwaukee Bucks.

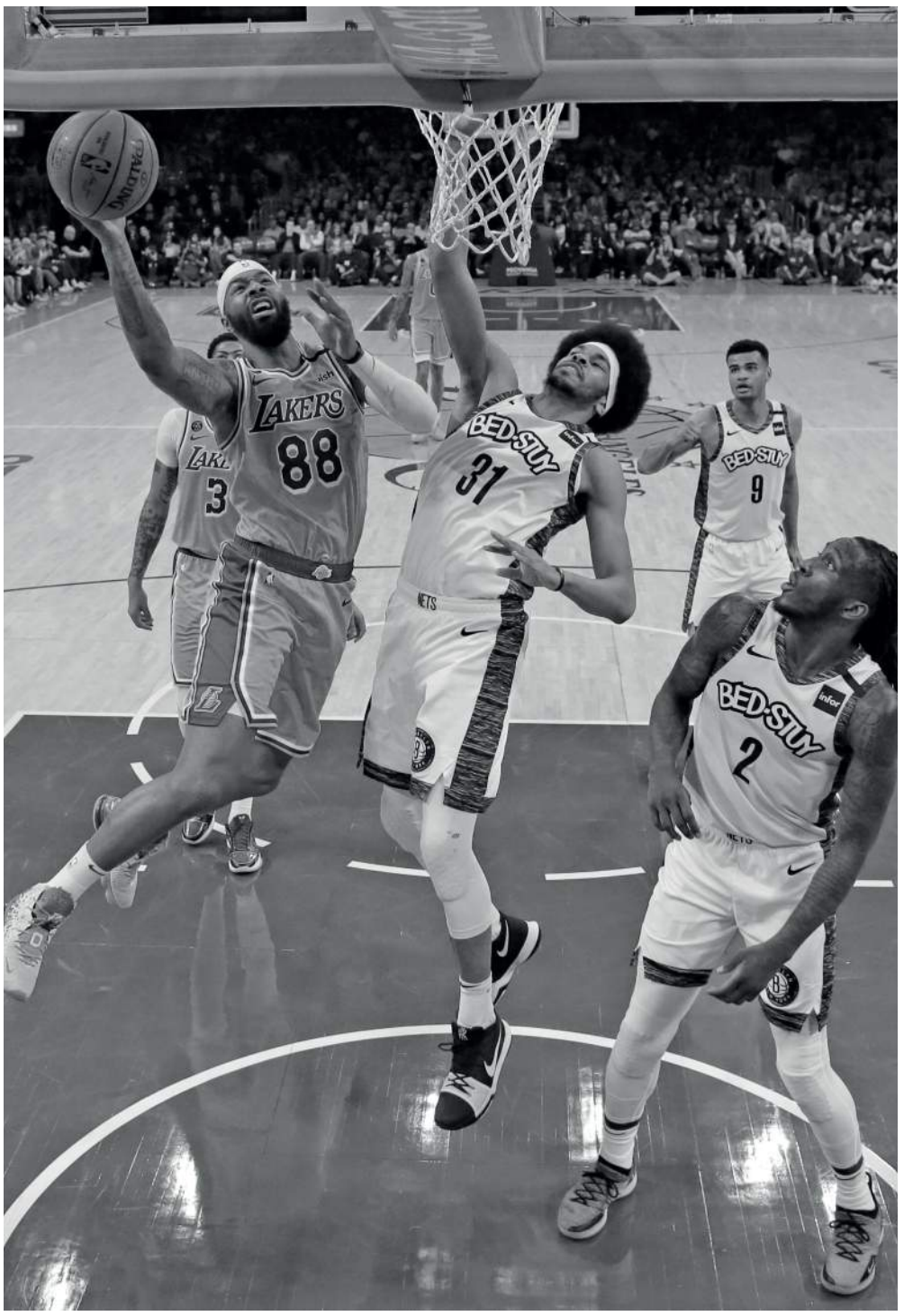
That means Spencer Dinwiddie gets to take on his hometown team in the postseason for the first time. It'd also create a much tougher matchup for the Nets, given the Lakers are one of the favorites to make it the NBA Finals, whereas the Raptors who'd still be a tough opponent—are among the teams in the East who could give the Milwaukee Bucks a fight in the East under the normal format, but ultimately aren't expected to make it to the final round.

It would also be the first time the Nets franchise played a Western Conference opponent in the playoffs since 2003, when they faced the San Antonio Spurs in the NBA Finals. It'd also be the second time the Nets ever faced the Lakers in the NBA Playoffs, the first instance being the 2002 NBA Finals.

Getting players feedback on return

NBA commissioner Adam Silver has been in information gathering mode since the day he was forced to shut the league down. He's gathered information from medical experts on how a return would work, talked to owners and GMs about the financial end and what they hope to see, and had conferences with the league's broadcast partners.

Most of all, Silver wanted to know what the players thought. With the NBA closing in on a return strategy, Silver and team owners will have a conference call that could lead to a decisive plan—players' union executive director Michele Roberts is taking the return plans to the players for feedback, according to Adrian Wojnarowski of ESPN.



AP

In this March 10, 2020 file photo, Los Angeles Lakers' Markieff Morris (88) drives to the basket next to Brooklyn Nets' Jarrett Allen (31) and Taurean Prince (2) during the first half of an NBA game in Los Angeles.

Roberts is conducting team-by-team conference calls with players, detailing talks with NBA on formats for resumption of play in Orlando, financial implications of those options and gathering feedback, sources said.

It looks like the NBA will return to play in Orlando, with training camps starting in late June and games in mid-July.

The questions to be answered are:

■ Do all 30 teams report to Orlando to play a handful of regular season games, getting teams over the 70 game threshold?

■ Do just the top 16 teams report with the league jumping straight to the playoffs?

■ If the league does go straight to the playoffs, how will that impact player pay, which is tied to the regular season?

■ Will there be a play-in tournament for the final playoff seeds?

■ Should the NBA do a 1-16 seed playoff format, or keep the traditional Eastern/Western conference format?

■ Will each playoff round have seven games, or will the first round (or two) be best-of-five?

Every option is still on the table (as officials will be quick to say). However, the buzz around the league has grown louder that just the Top 16 teams will go to Florida, and there will be seven-game series for every round, as the league tries to squelch any asterisk talk. ***(AP/NBC)***

PGA, NFL stars attract nearly 6M viewers in TV match

ATLANTA (AP)—Two of the biggest names from the PGA Tour and the NFL proved to be must-see TV.

Turner Sports said the Sunday telecast of "The Match: Champions for Charity" attracted an average of 5.8 million viewers across four of its networks. Turner says it was the most-watched golf telecast in cable TV history.

It said the previous record was 4.9 million viewers on ESPN at the 2010 Masters, the year Tiger Woods returned to golf for the first time since the scandal in his personal life.

Woods and Peyton Manning scored a 1-up victory over Phil Mickelson and Tom Brady at Medalist Golf Club, a match that featured high entertainment with shots and with words, along with raising $20 million for COVID-19 relief funds.

The peak was 6.3 million average viewers from 5:45 to 6 p.m. EDT. That was about the time Brady, who had been lampooned on social media for his golf skills, silenced analyst Charles Barkley by holing out from the fairway for birdie.

It was the second straight Sunday of live golf on television after the pandemic shut down the sport on March 13. The previous week, Rory McIlroy and Dustin Johnson defeated Rickie Fowler and Matthew Wolff at Seminole in an exhibition that NBC Sports said attracted 2.35 million viewers across all formats.

The Champions for Charity match was shown on TNT, TBS, truTV and HLN.

The PGA Tour is set to return in two weeks at Colonial in Fort Worth, Texas, for the Charles Schwab Challenge.

Woods looks good in first 'competition'

Amid the chaos of The Match II—with Mickelson's woofing and Manning's steadiness and Brady's (very) occasional brilliance—was one important revelation that nearly went unnoticed Sunday.

Nearly, we say, because here was Justin Thomas on the 17th hole, summing up the state of Woods' game as the latter reached for his tee before another scalded drive reached its apex:

"He's a fairway-hitting machine!"

Sure, this was nothing more than a silly hit-and-giggle for a worthy cause. And yes, Woods' home club, Medalist, offered more generous landing areas than Brady and Mickelson often made them look.

But still: In his first "competition" in 98 days, Woods looked good – his body and swing so good, in fact, that he reminded us that he's still capable of producing something epic during this golf season unlike any other. For one afternoon-turned-evening, at least, we could turn our attention from what has been into what still could be.

Though understandably forgotten in this global pandemic, the golf season held such immense potential for Woods. Late last year he brushed off offseason knee surgery and won his record-tying 82nd PGA Tour title, then was easily the best player at the Presidents Cup, where he carved up Royal Melbourne with his precision and posted a 3-0 record as a playing captain. Even though his 2020 debut at Torrey Pines got off to an uneven start, he grinded out a tie for ninth and drove the ball impeccably.

But last we saw Woods, at his Genesis Invitational in mid-February, he labored through four rounds, complained of a tight back and finished last among those who made the cut. Trying to buy time before the Masters, he skipped some of his usual starts—Mexico, Bay Hill, then The Players—prompting concern that he once again was breaking down.

Then came the shutdown, and it's likely no player on the planet benefited more from a three-month break than the 44-year-old Woods.

On Sunday, he looked healthy and swung freely, hitting every fairway, with a variety of clubs, oftentimes straight down the center stripe. Though woefully out of place in a gabfest, Woods' pure strikes were all the smack talk he needed. Early in the match, after Phil Mickelson nearly blew his tee shot out of the bounds on one of the long-drive holes, Woods stepped up and blistered one up the gut. "Oh man, I hit it in the fairway," he cracked. "Right in the middle. Darn it."

Rust was to be expected, and yet he masterfully shaped iron shots and displayed a deft touch around the greens. One of the only shots he missed was an 8-footer for par—which he attempted with a 4-iron, during a one-club challenge. Even then, he lipped out.

The completeness of Woods' game and his relative spryness were enough to fuel hopes for a big final push to the year, even though condensed schedules and Woods' battered body generally don't mix. The PGA Tour is set to resume in less than three weeks at Colonial, and Woods, on the verge of the all-time wins record, offered no new clues as to when he would return to competition this summer. "It's going to be interesting" is all he'd offer to Charles Barkley.

Interesting because the Tour's cloistered new reality might not be appealing to the sport's most famous star, yet he needs at least some tournament reps before charging into major season.

Boras thinks Nationals are built to win again

WASHINGTON — On Oct. 26, 2000, the New York Yankees took down the cross-town Mets in five games to win their third straight World Series, capping off a stretch of dominance matched by few in the history of the sport.

Since then, however, no team has managed to win even two World Series titles in a row. That's a stretch of 19 consecutive seasons without a repeat champion-the longest such streak in MLB history.

As the sport has emerged into a multi-billion-dollar business with teams pouring resources into analytics departments and devising methods to gain a competitive edge any way they can, it's become increasingly more difficult for champions to run it back the following year.

Scott Boras has been representing professional baseball players as an agent since the 1980s and has since developed into one of the most powerful sports agents in the world. He joined NBC Sports Washington's Todd Dybas and Chase Hughes on Friday's episode of the Nationals Talk podcast, where he was asked why he believes teams have struggled so much to go back to back.

"You normally see that the pitching staffs get exhausted in their run for the championship and because of that-you have those top three starters or four starters and the closers in the bullpen-you've got a fatigue factor where you go and look and those pitchers are not able to repeat what they did the prior year," Boras said.

"However, with the Nationals I think there's an asterisk on that because Max Scherzer and Stephen Strasburg are players that, they are who they are. I don't think [Patrick] Corbin innings-wise was overtly stretched in 2019 so that impact on the pitching I think may be to a lesser extent for the Nationals."

Boras, of course, represents both Scherzer and Strasburg-as well as Juan Soto and many other players on the Nationals-so it comes as no surprise that he believes Washington's star pitchers are capable of retaining their 2019 form.

It also helps that the start of the 2020 season has been delayed due to the coronavirus pandemic, giving the Nationals' starters plenty of time to rest after the playoffs cut their offseason short.

Yet the pitching isn't the only reason why Boras believes in the Nationals. Despite All-Star third baseman Anthony Rendon (another Boras client) departing for the Los Angeles Angels in free agency, the longtime agent is optimistic about what the future holds for the Nationals' young outfield duo of Soto and Victor Robles.

"The other aspect of it is too is you got a Robles and a Juan Soto, who I think are going to produce more," Boras said. "I also think the overall outfield of the Nationals has the ability to probably get more production out of it than they did in '19. And the key factor will be for them is a very, very key player is no longer on the Nationals and it's very hard to replace Anthony Rendon.

"So, with the outfield performance increase and the fact that depending how the young players from the minor leagues step in and fill that hole, I think that'll be the measurement we're going to look at to say which will be outcome determinative of how well the Nationals do in their quest to repeat.

Meanwhile, throughout the Nationals' run to their first World Series title in franchise history, there were many points where it was easy to doubt them.

They stumbled out to a 19-31 start, putting them eight and a half games out of a playoff spot two months into the season. Even when they did make the playoffs, they trailed in five elimination games-including four against teams that won over 105 games in the regular season.

Yet the Nationals came back each time, surprising critics and oddsmakers alike with their ability to stay in the fight even with their backs against the wall. In one of the final pieces of their championship celebration, the Nationals unveiled their World Series ring design Sunday night to give both players and fans a glimpse of the championship jewelry.

After the presentation, several players joined MASN's Dan Kolko for a Zoom "after party" to discuss their thoughts on the rings. Among them was Howie Kendrick, who made up for missing out on the Nationals' Game 7 rewatch Zoom call by taking a dig at the scandal-ridden Houston Astros.

"Everybody expected us to get steamrolled by the Astros, but even with them cheatin' they still couldn't take us out," Kendrick said.

Less than two weeks after Houston lost to the Nationals in Game 7 of the World Series, news broke that the Astros had used hidden cameras to illegally steal opposing pitchers' signs during the 2017 and 2018 seasons. The report set off an offseason full of embarrassment for the reigning American League pennant winners, resulting in a series of public apologies and the ire of most of their opponents.

Although MLB reported that it found no evidence the Astros continued employing their sign-stealing scheme into the 2019 season, the Nationals still heard rumors Houston wasn't playing by the rules before the World Series.

So rather than take any chances, Washington devised a complicated set of signs based on laminated cards that pitchers and catchers kept in their pockets-allowing them to change signs from batter to batter or even pitch to pitch.

Cheating or not, Houston still fell victim to the Nationals' relentlessness and Kendrick's late-game heroics. Even with the Astros' scandal and the coronavirus pandemic dampening Washington's championship celebrations, Kendrick wasn't going to let an opportunity to rub it in pass him by. ***(AP/NBC)***

AP

In this Oct. 30, 2019, file photo, Washington Nationals' Howie Kendrick hits a two-run home run against the Houston Astros during the seventh inning of Game 7 of the World Series in Houston.

Former Cubs pitcher Straily details games without fans

Cubs fans may remember Dan Straily. The right-hander pitched for the club in 2014, making seven appearances (one start) before getting dealt to the Houston Astros the ensuing offseason in the Dexter Fowler trade.

Straily now pitches for the Lotte Giants in the KBO, South Korea's highest level of pro ball. The league kicked its season off earlier this month without fans in attendance, a model MLB will likely follow for most (if not all) of its potential 2020 season.

Jon Frankel, a correspondent for HBO's "Real Sports with Bryant Gumbel," recently interviewed current and former KBO players about the league's return during the coronavirus pandemic. In an excerpt made available via press release, Frankel asked Straily if he misses playing in front of a crowd.

"Of course. Like, even if you're on the road, and people are just telling you how much you suck—you thrive off it," Straily said. "You feed off that energy."

Crowd noise obviously plays a big part in an athlete's adrenaline. Not having that factor will be an adjustment for MLB in 2020, and Straily took things a step further regarding the circumstances players face without fans in attendance.

"My shortstop dove for a ball. And he missed it by, like, an inch," he said. "Like, it was an incredible effort. When he hit the ground, I heard the air leave his lungs. And we've talked about that in the dugout. Because I've never once in my life heard that."

Not having crowds to drown out on-field noise could make for a unique viewing experience for fans at home. UFC returned on May 9, and many punches and kicks were audible on ESPN's TV broadcast.

MLB teams could play proxy crowd noise in games, but nevertheless, fans may pickup noises on their TVs previously unavailable from home.

Meanwhile, Bartolo Colon refuses to entertain the idea of retirement.

It doesn't matter that he didn't pitch in 2019 and that on Sunday he turned 47.

He craves one more shot in the majors.

"I'm not retired. That's not in my mind," Colon told The Associated Press in a phone interview. "I'm still hoping of reaching my goal of pitching 46 innings. I'll sign with the first team who wants me."

Why 46?

That's the number of innings that will propel him to pass Hall of Famer Juan Marichal for the most by a Dominican pitcher.

In his last big league season, with the Texas Rangers in 2018, Colon managed to reach 3,461 2/3 innings. He is 247-188 in 565 games—552 as a starter since his debut with Cleveland in 1997.

Marichal managed to pitch 3,507 innings in 471 games over 16 years.

Colon is aware that time is against him.

"I know this is not a sport for the old, it's for the young," Colon said. "I keep training. Even though I'm not playing right now, I tried to keep fit."

The coronavirus pandemic altered Colon's plans this year.

Back in March, he was gearing up to pitch with the Monclova Acereros of the Mexican Baseball League. But their preseason was stopped when the outbreak forced the league to shut down, and a restart status is uncertain.

"I had to decide to stay in Mexico or get back to the Dominican Republic. I went to my country and they also have quarantines and curfews," he said. "I'm still waiting. The Monclova people say they will tell me what will be happening with the season, depending on the virus." ***(NBC)***

Freeman shuts down retirement rumors

AP
In this Dec. 29, 2019 file photo, Atlanta Falcons running back Devonta Freeman (24) leaps over teammate Keith Smith (40) against the Tampa Bay Buccaneers during an NFL game in Tampa, Fla.

ATLANTA—Devonta Freeman isn't retiring anytime soon.

In fact, the former Atlanta Falcons running back thinks he has another decade left in him.

Freeman, who is still a free agent after the Falcons released him this offseason, slammed the latest retirement rumors in a since-deleted tweet on Monday.

"I got 10 more years in me," Freeman tweeted, via NBC's Mike Florio. "Kill that fake retirement s--t! & Btw F all y'all!"

While Freeman remains adamant that he isn't done playing in the NFL, his options for next season are pretty limited based on the type of contract he's apparently looking for.

The 28-year-old has struggled in recent years, and hasn't had a 1,000-yard season since 2016. After missing nearly all of 2018 with a groin injury, Freeman mustered just 656 rushing yards and two touchdowns in 14 games last year. So, even with three years left on his deal with Atlanta, the Falcons released him in favor of Todd Gurley instead.

Freeman apparently had a one-year, $4 million deal offered to him by the Seattle Seahawks last week, though he shut them down. Seattle eventually turned to Carlos Hyde instead, offering him the same deal.

Freeman is apparently willing to simply sit out the 2020 season if he doesn't get the right offer, too.

The retirement rumors swirled even more on Monday after the NFL Network's Ian Rapoport thinks that as a very real possibility for the veteran if he doesn't settle soon.

"[Freeman] still wants big money. Could he actually retire? Maybe," Rapoport said while suggesting the Philadelphia Eagles could be a good fit for him. "Probably more likely is at some point just realize to take what he can get."

There are plenty of teams in the league that could use Freeman this season, though likely not in a role that he's used to or wants to be in.

Until he finds the deal he wants, though, Freeman seems willing to just keep waiting.

Prescott will get deal done with Cowboys

Dallas and quarterback Dak Prescott have yet to reach an agreement on a long-term deal, something that has been a growing point of concern for Cowboys fans this offseason.

Hall of Famer and current Fox analyst Troy Aikman, however, isn't worried about the lingering contract negotiations.

"I've been surprised that there has been so much discussion about his contract," Aikman said Monday. "It's not like he's not going to be playing for the Cowboys in 2020. Whether he is franchised or he has a deal, he's going to be here playing and eventually a deal gets done. So it's not high on my list of things I look at in the league and what's happening with the other 31 teams."

The Cowboys have used the franchise tag on Prescott, though the two sides have struggled to agree to a long-term deal. There were rumblings last week of a five-year, $175 million deal last week, however both the team and Prescott's agent denied that was ever on the table.

Aikman, who played for the Cowboys from 1989-2000 and won three Super Bowls in Dallas, said he "strongly" believes that Prescott and the team will reach a long-term deal instead of him playing under the franchise tag this year — something they have until July 15 to get done.

And after what he's seen from Prescott in his first four years with the team — the 26-year-old threw for more than 4,900 yards and had 30 touchdowns last season alone—Aikman doesn't think he'll be suiting up anywhere else in the league for quite some time.

"I love Dak Prescott," Aikman said. "I love everything about him … I'm not saying anything the Cowboys don't already know. They will pay him, he's going to make a lot of money, and I think he's going to be the quarterback for the Cowboys for a long, long time and continue to have a great career.

Meanwhile, the signing of draft picks to contracts is happening, but not nearly as quickly as it has in recent years.

Through Friday, only 48 of 255 draft selections had signed, a rate of 18.82 percent.

Two first-round picks have signed: Dolphins quarterback Tua Tagovailoa (fifth overall) and Panthers defensive tackle Derrick Brown (seventh overall). That's the lowest number in any round.

The most picks have signed in round six—14 of 35.

Teams that had yet to sign any draft picks as of Friday include the Cardinals, Falcons, Bears, Bengals, Cowboys, Broncos, Packers, Chiefs, Rams, Chargers, Raiders, Vikings, Saints, Jets, Steelers, 49ers, Seahawks, Buccaneers, and Washington.

There's no urgency to sign rookie this year, because there are no offseason programs. The process undoubtedly will accelerate, likely after the Fourth of July. Until then, plenty of rookies will have to wait for their money. ***(AP/NPC)***

NEW

From Page 24

continue to work with NMSA in improving the Oleai Sports Complex, which is the proposed main venue for the CNMI hosting of the Pacific Mini Games in 2022.

"We applied for a big grant to redo the sports family and build a building for cultural events on island. That $20-million grant is now under review and we're hoping for positive results," Hunter said.

Meanwhile, NMSA welcomed the latest development at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

"We would like to thank DCCA, Commonwealth Council for Arts and Culture, the and National Endowment for the Arts for this project. The Oleai Sports Complex is a landmark on island and its facilities, including the Ada Gym, have hosted numerous sports events and community activities for decades. However, for the past five years, the Oleai Sports Complex has sustained significant damage due to two super typhoons, so improvements in our facilities are definitely needed," NMSA president Jerry Tan said.

"We look forward to working with DCCA, other government agencies, and the private sector as we strive to provide our community a safer and better facility for sports events and health and wellness activities," Tan added.

TRAINING

From Page 24

sions wins via triangle arm-bar, and Guillotine and arm-triangle chokes. The 29-year-old has only one victory via KO/TKO so far compared to Camacho's 17.

"Against Frevola, I will keep my guard high and will always be ready to counter," said Camacho, who also has a better striking accuracy than Frevola, 46 %-36%.

Versus Frevola, Camacho is looking for his third UFC victory (he defeated Damien Brown in 2017 and Nick Hein in 2019) and a good start to his new four-fight deal with the MMA promotion company. Frevola, on the other hand, is hoping to extend his win streak to three after prevailing against Luis Pena and Jalin Turner last year.

MMAJUNKIE PHOTO
Matt "The Steamrolla" Frevola, right, lands a punch on Lando Vannata during their bout in UFC 230 in November 2018 in New York. Frevola will face Frank "The Crank" Camacho next month in UFC Fight Night 173 in Las Vegas.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
A screen grab of Frank "The Crank" Camacho's lancheru-style training shows him doing wheelbarrow drills.

Top 16 seeding could pit Nets vs Lakers

PAGE 21

Saipan Tribune
Sports

Boras thinks Nationals are built to win again

PAGE 22

'The Crank' banks on *lancheru* training

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Frank "The Crank" Camacho just got a short notice for his first match of the season, but believes he is in good shape and ready to battle Matt "The Steamrolla" Frevola in UFC Fight Night 173.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

In this June 1, 2019 file photo, Frank "The Crank" Camacho takes a shot on Nick Hein during the first round of their bout in the UFC Fight Night 153 in Stockholm, Sweden.

The Camacho-Frevola tussle will take place on June 20 in Las Vegas, leaving the Marianas warriors with less than a month to fine-tune his MMA skills and work on his game plan against the New York fighter. However, even before he got a call to compete in next month's event, the Guam-based Camacho has been training for months, *lancheru*-style.

"Home training has been very well. It's *lancheru*, farm-style, as I dig holes, cut tangan-tangan, run with the wheelbarrow and do yard work and other projects at home to stay in shape. I have to be creative under this circumstance (pandemic)," the 31-year-old athlete said, adding that he also does his usual bag work and mixes it with a lot of running and biking.

Camacho will then switch from farm to gym training in a few days, as he is scheduled to leave for the mainland early this morning. He will first stop in California to meet with coach Colin Oyama and his teammates and then head to Las Vegas this Wednesday (Thursday on Saipan).

"We will go over our game plan and get some fine tuning for three weeks with coach Colin. I am really excited with this fight and for the opportunity to get back in there (octagon cage) and represent the Marianas again amid this crisis," the lightweight fighter said.

On top of Camacho's strategies against Frevola would be how to keep up with the latter's stamina.

"He has a huge gas tank. He does not have a particular skill, as he is a Jack of all trades. He is very explosive and squirmy. It's definitely going to be a tough, but fun fight," Camacho said.

Half of Frevola's 10 fights all went the distance (three rounds) and he won four of them. His three-round duel against Lando Vannata in UFC 230 in 20018 ended in a draw, while he recorded submis-

See TRAINING on Page 23

New mural at Ada Gymnasium

The old, left, and new mural at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

After 14 years, a new mural has emerged at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

A project of the Department of Community and Cultural Affairs' Commonwealth Council for Arts and Culture through the National Endowment for the Arts, the mural features the CNMI colors, culture, and sports. It replaced the mural that was created in 2006 when the Commonwealth hosted the Micronesian Games.

DCCA Secretary Robert Hunter said the project came from a grant and proposals for design were solicited from interested groups several months ago. The DCCA, CCAC, and Northern Marianas Sports Association, which maintains the Ada Gymnasium and other facilities at the Oleai Sports Complex, decided on the winning design, which came from Roil Soil.

Roil Soil's Shayne Villanueva said they are 70% done with the project and are looking to finish it this weekend, including cleaning the front portion of the building.

"We look for ways to improve areas in our community and we're happy to work with DCCA and the National Endowment for the Arts for this mural. The design is a representation of the CNMI and its culture and since this is a sports facility, we also utilize the sports that are played on island," Villanueva said.

Hunter said DCCA is pleased with how fast the mural was created and how it gave the facility a welcoming look.

He added that DCCA will

See NEW on Page 23